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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

APRIL, 1920

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"Five Years of Theosophy"—Thirty-Five Years After

THE Theosophical Society includes science among the subjects for study defined in its second object; and, ever since the publication of *Isis Unveiled,* with one of its two volumes devoted to science and the criticism of science, this important subject has received attention only second to that which students of Theosophy have devoted to the theoretical and practical study of spiritual life.

The reason why this great emphasis has been laid on science and the study of science is, perhaps, most clearly and convincingly stated by a Master of spiritual life, in the Comments on *Light on the Path:* "The most absolute and universal laws of natural and physical life, as understood by the scientist, will pass away when the life of this universe has passed away, and only its soul is left in the silence. What then will be the value of the knowledge of its laws acquired by industry and observation? I pray that no reader or critic will imagine that by what I have said I intend to depreciate or disparage acquired knowledge, or the work of scientists. On the contrary, I hold that scientific men are the pioneers of modern thought. The days of literature and of art, when poets and sculptors saw the divine light, and put it into their own great language—these days lie buried in the long past with the ante-Phidian sculptors and the pre-Homeric poets. The mysteries no longer rule the world of thought and beauty; human life is the governing power, not that which lies beyond it. But the scientific workers are progressing, not so much by their own will as by sheer force of circumstances, towards the far line which divides things interpretable from things uninterpretable. Every fresh discovery drives them a step onward. Therefore do I very highly esteem the knowledge obtained by work and experiment."

"Scientific men are the pioneers of modern thought." The Comments from which this passage was taken were first published in an

early number of *Lucifer,* in the autumn of 1887. They were written, therefore, some thirty-three years ago. If scientists are the pioneers of modern thought, what progress have they made, in the third of a century which has elapsed since this verdict upon their work was recorded, towards "the far line which divides things interpretable from things uninterpretable"?

It happens that we have a very convenient way of measuring that progress. A short time after Madame Blavatsky went to India, at the beginning of 1879, *The Theosophist* was established. Not many months later, its work and hers attracted the attention of Mr. A. P. Sinnett, then editor of a leading Anglo-Indian paper. As a result, Madame Blavatsky met Mr. Sinnett, thus opening the way for the events, and the far more vital correspondence with the Master Koot Hoomi, recorded in *The Occult World.* Further letters were written by this Master, and their substance, so far as Mr. Sinnett was able to comprehend it, was embodied in a series of articles, with the general title, *Fragments of Occult Truth,* which appeared in *The Theosophist* over the signature "Lay Chela," adopted by Mr. Sinnett. These essays were afterwards brought together, with additional material, in *Esoteric Buddhism,* to which permanent value is given by the numerous extracts from the Master Koot Hoomi's letters.

While passing through London on her way from New York to India, in the winter of 1878-1879, Madame Blavatsky spent some time with the members of the London Lodge of The Theosophical Society, which had been established some time before, as the result of correspondence with her; for during a long series of years Madame Blavatsky had the official title, and fulfilled the duties, of Corresponding Secretary of The Theosophical Society, doing an immense amount of pioneer organization in this way, in the intervals of work upon her books.

A close relation, through correspondence of this kind, was maintained with the members of the London Lodge, after Madame Blavatsky went to India, and during the period covered by *The Occult World* and *Esoteric Buddhism.* As a result, some time after the publication of *Esoteric Buddhism,* and its study by the members of the London Lodge, these members raised a series of questions, dealing with scientific and historical difficulties which they conceived to have been created by statements in the letters of the Master K. H., or by Mr. Sinnett's deductions from these.

The questions, ten in number, were sent to Madame Blavatsky in India. They in due time appeared, with long and very valuable replies to most of them, in the pages of *The Theosophist.* In the spring of 1885, they were included, with additional articles of varying value and interest, in the book, *Five Years of Theosophy,* edited by the Bengali Brahman, Mohini Mohun Chatterji, then in London, and intended to

contain, in a more available form, the best articles published during the first five years of *The Theosophist.*

These "Replies to an English F. T. S." form one of the most valuable parts, perhaps the most valuable part, of that book: valuable, because they avowedly give the views of "the Adepts" on the questions raised. The tradition was, that much of the material was supplied by a Master, a native of India, through Madame Blavatsky, who did most of the actual writing, with some assistance from Mr. T. Subba Row, who was at that time the agent in Madras for the head of the Sringeri Matham, the school of the followers of Shankaracharya. Mr. Subba Row was thus "the agent of the Shankaracharya," since the title of the first Shankaracharya has been borne by all his successors, in the line of "apostolic succession," called in India the "Guru-parampara chain," or succession of Gurus, spiritual teachers.

Now it happens that the author or authors of these replies, speaking expressly for the Adepts, not only give extremely valuable answers to the "Enquiries suggested by *Esoteric Buddhism,*" but go further, and, in what are avowedly prophecies, indicate the future progress of certain of the sciences, along definite lines; the progress "towards the far line which divides things interpretable from things uninterpretable," indicated by the Master who is the author of *Light on the Path.*

The interesting question thus arises: to what extent, in the thirty-five years which have passed since *Five Years of Theosophy* was published, have these sciences progressed in this direction? How far have these explicit prophecies, made by the Adepts more than a third of a century ago, been fulfilled? These Notes and Comments are an attempt, necessarily very incomplete and imperfect, to answer this extremely interesting question.

One of the most remarkable of these "prophecies" and also that one, perhaps, whose recent verification has created the most widespread comment, is contained in the reply to the first question: "Do the Adepts deny the Nebular Theory?" The prophetic passage follows: "When an astronomer is found in his reports 'gauging *infinitude,*' even the most intuitional of his class is but too often apt to forget that he is gauging only the superficies of a small area and its visible depths, and to speak of these as though they were merely the cubic contents of some known quantity. This is the direct result of the present conception of a three-dimensional space. The turn of a four-dimensional world is near, but the puzzle of science will ever continue until their concepts reach the natural dimensions of visible and invisible space—in its septenary completeness. 'The Infinite and the Absolute are only the names for two counter-imbecilities of the human (uninitiated) mind'; and to regard them as the transmuted 'properties of the nature of things—of two subjective negatives converted into objective affirmatives,' as Sir William Hamilton puts it, is to know nothing of the infinite operations of human

liberated spirit, or of its attributes, the first of which is its ability to pass *beyond* the region of our terrestrial experience of matter and space. As an absolute vacuum is an impossibility *below,* so is it a like impossibility *above.* But our molecules, the infinitesimals of the vacuum 'below,' are replaced by the giant-atom of the Infinitude 'above.' When demonstrated, the four-dimensional conception of space may lead to the invention of new instruments to explore the extremely dense matter that surrounds us as a ball of pitch might surround—say, a fly, but which, in our extreme ignorance of all its properties save those we find it exercising on our earth, we yet call the *clear,* the *serene,* and the *transparent* atmosphere. This is no psychology, but simply occult physics, which can never confound 'substance' with 'centres of force,' to use the terminology of a Western science which is ignorant of Maya. In less than a century, besides telescopes, microscopes, micrographs and telephones, the Royal Society will have to offer a premium for such an *etheroscope.*"

Now the noteworthy point is that, during the last few months since the total eclipse of the sun in May, 1918, the idea of a four-dimensional space has not only been publicly canvassed in scientific and even popular writings throughout the world, but has been strikingly indicated by an experiment carried out during an eclipse in May, 1919, as we shall presently see. Therefore the explicit prophecy that "the turn of a four-dimensional world is near," appears quite literally fulfilled.

As a point of historical interest, it may be noted that, while the conception of four-dimensional space has been discussed for a considerable period in the West, it was first given general currency by Zöllner, whose best known book was published, in an English translation by Mr. C. C. Massey, some time prior to 1885. Zöllner, in this book, worked out the theory that many of the best known phenomena of Spiritualism, and especially the physical phenomena, could be easily explained by the theory of a space of four dimensions; and that the forces, whatever they were, which produced these phenomena, were able to do so, through the power to act in space of four dimensions.

Of Zöllner, the writer of the reply just quoted has this to say: "The sequence of martyrs to the great universal truths has never been once broken; and the long list of known and unknown sufferers, headed with the name of Galileo, now closes with that of Zöllner. Is the world of science aware of the real cause of Zöllner's premature death? When the fourth dimension of space becomes a scientific reality like the fourth state of matter, he may have a statue raised to him by grateful posterity. But this will neither recall him to life, nor will it obliterate the days and months of mental agony that harassed the soul of this intuitional, far-seeing, modest genius, made even after his death to receive the donkey's kick of misrepresentation and to be publicly charged with lunacy."

Something was said, in the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY for January, 1920 (page 258), on the theories of the Swiss mathematician, Einstein, and their relation to the conception of space of four dimensions. We may give here an outline of the crucial experiment by which it is held that Einstein's theory has been demonstrated. It is contained in the report of a lecture delivered at the end of 1919 in London, by Dr. Charles Davidson, F.R.A.S., stating some of the results of observations of the eclipse of the sun on May 29, 1919:

"The result of the British eclipse expeditions to Sobral, in Brazil, and the island of Principe, off the west coast of Africa, stated in non-technical language, is to prove that light has weight in proportion to its mass, as matter has. . . .

"There are two theories of light—the corpuscular and the undulatory. The corpuscular supposes that light is composed of a stream of particles shot across space with great velocity. This is not accepted now, but was the theory held by Sir Isaac Newton, who himself suggested that it would be in consonance with the law of gravitation that light, in passing the sun, would be deflected from the straight path.

"In the early part of the nineteenth century the corpuscular theory gave place to the undulatory theory, which supposes that light is a wave motion in the ether. Ether is a medium hypothecated for the transmission of light.

"Light is a form of electro-magnetic energy, and therefore has mass, but the question to be solved by the eclipse expeditions was whether light had weight. If light had weight as well as mass, it would be deflected on passing near the sun.

"The only way in which this could be tested was by observing stars close to the sun, and the only time at which this could be done was during a total eclipse.

"The eclipse on May 29 (1919) last was a favourable one for the purpose, as at the time of totality the sun happened to be in the midst of a group of bright stars called the Hyades.

"If light were subject to gravity, following the Newtonian law, a star grazing the limb of the sun would be displaced outward by a quantity rather less than the two-thousandth part of the diameter of the moon. Of recent years, however, a new gravitational theory has been put forward by a Swiss mathematician, Professor Einstein, and, according to this theory, the deflection would be twice as great. The eclipse expeditions went in order to determine whether light was deflected at all or not, and, if deflected, whether it was according to the Newtonian or the Einstein law.

"Having secured the eclipse photographs of the Hyades, it was necessary for the Sobral observers to remain a couple of months in order to secure the same field of stars in the night sky, the whole test consisting in whether the presence or absence of the sun made a difference

in the apparent relative positions of the stars. These photographs were secured in July, and the observers returned to England. The photographs have now been measured, and the result is in accordance with the theory of Einstein."

If time and space permitted, it would be of value to go into the further question suggested: the controversy between the corpuscular and undulatory theories of light. For the present, we cannot do more than refer readers to the highly suggestive section in *The Secret Doctrine,* Volume I, "An Lumen Sit Corpus Nec Non";—"Whether light is a body or not." It would appear that at this point also, the occult teaching, given out a third of a century ago, is being vindicated.

In the reply to the second question propounded by the English F. T. S., "Is the sun merely a cooling mass?" the spokesman of the Adepts has much to say concerning the real source of the sun's heat and light. Among other things, he says:

"When all his anthropomorphic conceptions are put aside, Sir John Herschel, whose *intuition* was still greater than his great learning, alone of all astronomers comes near the truth—far nearer than any of those modern astronomers who, while admiring his gigantic learning, smile at his 'imaginative and fanciful theories.' His only mistake, now shared by most astronomers, was that he regarded the 'opaque body' occasionally observed through the curtain of the 'luminous envelope' as the sun itself. When saying in the course of his speculations upon the Nasmyth willow-leaf theory: 'The definite shape of these objects, their exact similarity one to another . . . all these characters seem quite repugnant to the notion of their being of a vaporous, a cloudy, or a fluid nature'—his spiritual intuition served him better than his remarkable knowledge of physical science. When he adds: 'Nothing remains but to consider them *as separate and independent* sheets, flakes . . . having *some sort of solidity*. . . . Be they what they may, they are evidently *the immediate sources of the solar light and heat*'—he utters a grander physical truth than was ever uttered by any living astronomer. And when, furthermore, we find him postulating: 'Looked at in this point of view, we cannot refuse to regard them as *organisms* of some peculiar and amazing kind; and though it would be too daring to speak of such organization as partaking of the nature of life, yet *we do know that vital action is competent to develope at once heat, and light, and electricity*'—Sir John Herschel gives out a theory approximating an occult truth more than any of the profane ever did with regard to solar physics. These 'wonderful objects' are not, as a modern astronomer interprets Sir John Herschel's words, *'solar inhabitants,* whose fiery constitution enables them to illuminate, warm and electrize the whole solar system,' but simply the reservoirs of solar vital energy, the *vital* electricity that feeds the whole system in which it lives, and breathes, and has its being. The sun is,

as we say, the storehouse of our little cosmos, self-generating its vital fluid, and ever receiving as much as it gives out."

Once more, modern "discovery" is approximating to occult truth. We have before us an outline report from London, stating that Mr. W. G. Hooper, F.R.A.S., declares that "all human life springs from the sun through the generation of streams of ether (? vital electricity), which return to the sun exactly as the blood from the heart returns to it."

This will remind readers of *The Secret Doctrine* of the passage on page 290 (Edition of 1888) of the first volume:

"The real substance of the concealed (sun) is a nucleus of mother substance. It is the heart and matrix of all the living and existing forces in our solar universe. It is the kernel from which proceed to spread on their cyclic journeys all the powers that set in action the atoms in their functional duties, and the focus within which they again meet in their seventh essence every eleventh year," referring, probably, to the periods of sunspot maxima, every 11.11 years, as recognized by astronomers.

But the most remarkable fact in connection with this coincidence between the latest discoveries of science and the occult doctrines given out a third of a century ago, remains to be told. This very significant fact we find in a sentence in an editorial in the New York *Evening Sun,* which alludes to this new-old view as "the Hooper-Blavatsky theory of etheric circulation from the sun." Something has been said of the vindication of Zöllner, after a painful martyrdom of misrepresentation and calumny. This sentence just quoted may, perhaps, be the first step towards the recognition of the far greater genius and martyr, H. P. Blavatsky. It is a straw in the wind, but, like a straw in the wind, deeply significant of the way in which the wind is blowing, and we wish to underline the fact that the first recognition of identity between the earlier and later theories of the sun's circulation appeared, not in the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY, but in a New York evening paper.

The reply to the fifth question, concerning "the mineral monad," was, on her own testimony, written by the author of *The Secret Doctrine.* Among other things, this is said of the mineral monad: "The term merely means that the tidal wave of spiritual evolution is passing through that arc of its circuit. The 'monadic essence' begins imperceptibly to differentiate in the vegetable kingdom. As the monads are uncompounded things, as correctly defined by Leibnitz, it is the spiritual essence which vivifies them in their degrees of differentiation which constitutes properly the monad—not the atomic aggregation which is only the *vehicle* and the substance through which thrill the lower and higher degrees of intelligence. And though, as shown by those plants that are known as sensitives, there are a few among them that may be regarded as possessing that conscious perception which is called by Leibnitz *apperception,* while the rest are endowed but with that internal activity which

may be called vegetable *nerve*-sensation (to call it *perception* would be wrong), yet even the vegetable monad is still *the* monad in its second degree of awakening sensation."

In the *Illustrated London News* for January 3, 1920, on the sixth page, we find recorded, as a striking novelty, experiments exactly in line with the paragraph just quoted, which was written nearly forty years ago. An account is there given, of the discovery, by Sir Jagadis Chandra Bose of Calcutta "that all plants, including even rigid trees, are fully sensitive to the changes around them. Even the passing of a drifting cloud is perceived and recorded by the tree in its own peculiar script by an instrument invented for this purpose.

"Sir Jagadis invented a special apparatus known as the resonance recorder, by which the spontaneous pulsation in the plant or the throb evoked by an external shock is automatically recorded; the size of the pulsation giving a measure of the vitality of the plant. When highly stimulated, the pulsations become enhanced in size; under depressing conditions the pulse-beats become enfeebled; and at the moment of death there is an end of all pulsation. This is seen exemplified in the automatic record of the leaflet of the Indian plant *Desmodium Gyrans,* which under the action of ether has its pulsation arrested, but on the blowing off of the narcotic vapour has its throbbing pulse restored. In the next record is seen the effect of poisons, the pulsation coming to a permanent stoppage with the death of the plant. These investigations have completely established the fundamental unity of life reactions in plant and animal, as seen in the similar period of insensibility in both corresponding to what we call sleep; as seen in the death spasm, which takes place in the plant as in the animal.

"In the pursuit of his investigations, Sir Jagadis was led into the border region of physics of inorganic, and the physiology of living matter, and was amazed to find boundary lines vanishing and points of contact emerge between the realms of the living and non-living. Inorganic matter was found anything but inert, it also was athrill under the action of multitudinous forces that played on it. Universal reaction seemed to bring together metal, plant and animal under a common law. They all exhibited essentially the same phenomena of fatigue and depression, together with possibilities of recovery and exaltation, yet also that of permanent irresponsiveness, which is associated with death. And he thus concludes his memorable address before the Royal Institute: 'It was when I came upon the mute witness of these self-made records and perceived in them one phase of a pervading unity that bears within it all things, the mote that quivers in ripples of life, the teeming life upon our earth and the radiant sun that shines above us—it was then that I understood for the first time a little of that message proclaimed by my ancestors on the banks of the Ganges thirty centuries ago: "They who see but one in all the changing manifestations of this universe, unto them belongs Eternal Truth—unto none else, unto none else."'"

It is interesting at this point to cite the following: "Moreover Anaxagoras and Empedocles say that plants are set in motion by desire, and that they perceive, and feel pleasure and pain. . . . Anaxagoras, Democritus and Empedocles say that plants have mind and intelligence. . . . Again Empedocles says that plants come into being in an inferior world that is not perfect in its completion, and when it is completed the animal comes into being."

We come now to the sixth question propounded by the English F. T. S. "Is there not some confusion in the letter quoted on page 62 of *Esoteric Buddhism,* where the 'old Greeks and Romans' are said to have been Atlanteans?" This question elicited an exceedingly interesting and valuable reply, which falls into two parts. The first of these consists of an extremely ironical examination of the methods of western historians, while the second conveys the facts revealed by occult records.

The case for the Adepts is put with infinite humour: "For a body of, so to say, unlicensed preachers and students of unauthorized and unrecognized sciences to offer to fight an august body of universally recognized oracles would be an unprecedented piece of impertinence. Hence their respective claims had to be examined on however small a scale to begin with (in this as in all other cases) on other than psychological grounds. The 'Adepts' in Occult Arts had better keep silence when confronted with the 'A.C.S.'s'—Adepts in Conjectural Sciences —unless they could show, partially at least, how weak is the authority of the latter and on what foundations of shifting sands their scientific *dicta* are built. They may thus make it a thinkable conjecture that the former may be right, after all."

Now the interesting point, this time, is, that exactly the same charge, and in almost the same words, has been brought against these same historians of the last century by the writer who is recognized as the greatest living authority on the history of Rome. In a popularly written book, *A Short History of Rome,* in which Guglielmo Ferrero was assisted by Corrado Barbagallo, and which appears to have been written in 1917, we find in the Preface the following declaration:

"We have deliberately avoided the methods of historical criticism which have been so much in fashion during the last ten years—methods which call themselves scientific, but which are usually as sterile as they are pretentious. We have accordingly refrained from hypotheses which contradict coherent and historically attested facts, and we have not endeavored by subtle and conjectural argument to sustain, against received accounts and available evidence, inventions that can neither be proved nor disproved. . . ."

The following passage, from the beginning of the history, shows that this criticism is by no means confined to writers of the preceding ten years, as the passage just cited from the Preface might suggest: "Towards the middle of the eighth century B.C., Italy was already

peopled by many races. How many and what they were, wherein precisely they were distinguished, whence they came and where they settled, it is impossible to say with certainty. The scholars of the nineteenth century, who believed they knew everything, pretended that they knew this, but according to custom each sought to prove that all his predecessors were wrong. . . .

"During the nineteenth century there flourished in the universities of Germany a historical school which, by the Germanization of a Greek word, termed itself 'critical.' The besetting sin of this school is its determination to extract at all costs, from the abysses of the past, historical data which are hopelessly lost. Some of its over-confident followers, as might be expected, set themselves the task of proving that the traditional stories are wrong in relating that Rome was founded about the middle of the eighth century, or, more precisely, according to the date now universally accepted, in 754 B.C. And heaven knows what ingenuity these audacious critics have squandered on clever inductions and subtle arguments!"

This is exactly the tone in which the reply to the question about the "old Greeks and Romans" treats the same Adepts in Conjectural Sciences. And, while there is not yet a full agreement, there is a very decided approach to the view set forth in that reply, in the conclusion reached by Ferrero, concerning the earliest period of Rome. A single sentence must suffice to indicate this approach:

"Romulus and Remus have been the heroes of antique legend throughout the ages. Learned critics have thought they could prove that they were nothing but imaginary figures thrown off from the name Roma. So perhaps, two thousand years hence, erudite persons will be apt to teach that Amerigo was merely an imaginary eponymous hero of America, Columbus of British Columbia and Bolivar of Bolivia. . . ."

With this may be compared the following sentences of the Reply:

"Of course if the historical foundation of the fable of the twins (Romulus and Remus) of the Vestal Silvia is entirely rejected, together with that of the foundation of Alba Longa by the son of Aeneas, then it stands to reason that the whole of the statements made must be likewise a modern invention built upon the utterly worthless fables of the 'legendary mythical age.' For those who now give these statements, however, there is more of actual truth in such fables than there is in the alleged *historical* regal period of the earliest Romans. It is to be deplored that the present statement should clash with the authoritative conclusion of Mommsen and others. . . ."

An effort will be made, in a later number, to carry on this theme, and to show how, in other departments of science, there is a like approach to the occult teachings.

FRAGMENTS

WHAT of the past, O Lanoo, what of the past?

A breath blown in the night from farthest distances, full of songs and full of wailings, scents of flowers and of dying leaves, rainbows of hopes and rains of discouragement, storms of passion and lightnings of sin, dawns of resolve and twilights of failure, high noons of brave enterprise and a few sweet autumns of accomplishment,—so few alas! Only the sunlight of opportunity was stedfast, and the faithful watching of the patient stars.

What of the present, Lanoo?

Opportunity and again opportunity, flying swifter than thought over one's shoulder to join the night; caught—a few of them; lost on the wind in heedlessness, most of them, as they blow past, unrecognized until out of reach.

And the future?

A veil, woven of the tissue of all, covering the path that leads onward, the path that winds, winds endlessly because of this veiling, winds somewhere to the Heart of things where there is stillness and peace.

CAVÉ.

Wide opened is the door of the Immortal to all who have ears to hear; let them send forth faith to meet it.

—BUDDHIST SUTTAS.

WAR-TIME IMPRESSIONS

AS the anniversary of Armistice Day approached, I found myself going back over the events of those never-to-be-forgotten days of 1918, when I was still in France, working, as did those thousands of other American women, at whatever came my way. I had just returned to Paris from Lorraine, where I had been stationed not far from Nancy, doing civilian relief work. We had been but a few miles back of the firing line most of the summer, and had become rather more bored than thrilled by nightly air raids and daily rumours of threatened evacuation, as it was reported that that section of the front was to become specially eruptive almost any day; that the Allies were to make a big push just there, east of the *Grand Couronné*. Then suddenly, remotely, about the middle of October, came another sort of rumour—a whisper of armistice. This new rumour was greeted in different ways, strangely opposed. Some of the civilians, women and old men, hailed it with tears of joy, with prayers of thanksgiving; the army, almost to a man, could not seem to endure the idea of an armistice coming just then when victory was at last in sight. I happened to know the French General (and his staff) commanding the —ème Corps d'Armée which had its Headquarters at Lunéville not far from where I was stationed, and never have I seen men so—discouraged, I was going to say, as those men were. Now, at last, with every chance of brilliant success, after so many years of desperate fighting, now when the goal was fairly in sight, to have to halt! From the General down to the most inconspicuous orderly, there was a kind of desperation at the mere possibility of a halt. We all frankly and openly had the "blues," and we did not care who knew it.

This was, as I say, in Lorraine, and when I returned to Paris, a little later, I found the anti-Armistice sentiment fully as strong,—practically no one wanted to stop, now that we were at last closing in on Germany, now that we had as good as won the war. But, nevertheless, we knew that, all the time, close by at Versailles, that place of mystery, councils were in session behind closed doors, councils which were bringing the Armistice nearer and making it more of a certainty; and as time went on, the tense excitement grew, till at last came those eventful days, early in November, when we knew beyond a doubt that it was the beginning of the end.

First, on November 3rd, we heard that the Kaiser had been forced to acknowledge the transfer of his "fundamental rights" to the German people; then, on the 4th, that an Armistice had been signed in the field with Austria. Then in quick succession came the days which followed, so fraught with intensity of feeling, with suppressed excitement! We

read with bated breath the dispatches sent by the German High Command to Maréchal Foch, the dispatches asking for armistice terms, and a place of meeting where these terms could be received. To anyone who had lived in person through the horrors of the first year of the war, who had witnessed, in person, the barbaric insolence of the conquering German armies in occupied Belgium, who had felt, at that time, the almost inevitable despair of ever dominating such brute force, these dispatches, suing for a cession of hostilities, had a peculiar thrill.

At last the night came when we knew that the German plenipotentiaries had started on their way; we knew the very route they were to take when once inside our lines. The suppressed excitement was electric. I remember sitting alone in my room at the hotel that night of November 7th. All through the day I had been seeking for news, reading the notices which were posted up from time to time in the streets, or eagerly questioning any newcomer who might have the latest word to pass on. As night closed in, and the hours slipped away towards midnight, a strange hush of expectancy, which was almost hypnotic, settled down on me; I found myself listening, listening for the first sound of the approaching enemy, staring into the darkness for the first glimmering headlights of their military cars, trying to catch a glimpse of the white flag which, by order, they were obliged to carry. I felt myself strangely present at every stage of their unrepentant but humiliating journey; I saw them in mind pass the last outposts of the German line, cross the horror of No Man's Land, and be received in stern silence by the French officers stationed at the outposts of the Allied Front, for that purpose. Then the long dark blindfolded drive, over the shell-swept roads, through the war-torn land of their enemies,—one wonders if, in the darkness, no merciful sense of repentance came to those five men, no sorrow for the sins of their country.

After this came a short period of waiting, while wireless messages again flew to and fro, and couriers came and went between Allied Headquarters and Spa. The news of the abdication of the Kaiser on November 10th seemed relatively unimportant, he had sunk by this time to such inconsequence,—though I believe there was rather a demonstration that night in the streets of Paris. I did not, however, see it myself. Of course, by this time most of us had got used to the idea of Armistice. We knew it was coming and we made the most of it, and gave ourselves up to the excitement of it, so that when, on the morning of the 11th of November, "The Day" for us, all Paris went to work as usual, it was, however, with the certainty that before noon the war, as far as murder and rapine went, would be over. Rumours which grew into assertions came in, thick and fast, that the Armistice terms had already been signed at 5 a. m., and no one could keep his mind on his work. I was making a feeble attempt at the ordinary routine at my headquarters in the Avenue Gabriel, when suddenly, at eleven o'clock sharp, the air was rent

asunder by the guns of the Invalides, booming out the great news that guns were being fired for the last time. Boom, boom, they thundered from across the river, like the Gods of Olympus shouting a Hymn of Victory. The church bells added to the pæan, but above all rose the clamour of hurrying feet as the people came surging from the houses in great waves, carrying all before them. With the first sound of the guns I had rushed out, without hat or coat, into the Place de la Concorde, where for weeks there had stood hundreds of captured German cannon, aeroplanes, tanks, and so forth. A gigantic crowd was beginning to mass there, a crowd in the grip of such intense emotion, that for the most part it was dramatically silent, evidence of a people who had borne so much, had suffered so deeply, that joy at release could not spring into full life at a moment's notice. There were too many black-clad figures in it, to remind us of what the day meant. But joy there was, none the less. As if by magic, in less than five minutes after the guns first sounded, every window in sight was filled with the flags of the Allies, every man, woman and child wore his or her national colours and those of the Allied nations. Paris suddenly burst into a riot of colour, a blazing tulip bed. And the sun shone, brilliantly, as if in sympathy, and stranger shook hands with stranger, and we all cried *Vive la France! Vive les Alliés!* and—tears stood in every eye. We felt the presence of the sacred dead, those heroes who had given their all that we might celebrate this day, we felt ourselves surrounded by their loved presence, their glittering ranks filled the air. Theirs the glory of sacrifice, ours the silent gratitude and love. I believe that in those first hours, before the riotous rejoicing of the evening and night began, there were few hearts which were not completely consecrated to reverent thanksgiving, and a sense of overwhelming gratitude to the valiant dead.

Early in the afternoon the following notice, signed by the Municipal Council, was posted up all over Paris:

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE
CONSEIL MUNICIPAL DE PARIS
HABITANTS DE PARIS

C'est la Victoire, la Victoire triomphale; sur tous les fronts l'ennemi vaincu a déposé les armes, le sang va cesser de couler.

Que Paris sorte de la fière réserve qui lui a valu l'admiration du monde.

Donnons un libre cours à notre joie, à notre enthousiasme et refoulons nos larmes.

Pour témoigner à nos grands Soldats et à leurs incomparables Chefs notre reconnaissance infinie, pavoisons toutes nos maisons aux couleurs françaises et à celles de nos chers alliés.

Nos morts peuvent dormir en paix, le sublime sacrifice qu'ils ont fait de leur vie à l'avenir de la race et au salut de la Patrie ne sera pas stérile.

Pour eux comme pour nous "le jour de gloire est arrivé."

Vive la République!

Vive la France Immortelle!

Signé * .....

. . . . . .

Of course practically all shops of any size were closed shortly after noon, so that as the day wore on, the streets became more and more filled, and toward nightfall the principal streets and squares almost impassable. We have all either seen or read so much about Armistice Day in Paris, that I am not going to fill my "recollections" with a description of my own small experience of it, except to tell you one most amusing episode which is characteristic of the extremes of feeling to which everyone was subject. We were either silent or boisterous as the occasion struck us, no one behaved as on ordinary days. I was with difficulty making my way back to my hotel, late in the afternoon, and had just fought my way out of the crowd in the Avenue de l'Opéra into one of the little side streets, hoping, in this way, to make more progress. The street was, for the moment, quite empty, except for two soldiers, a British and an American, who were marching most fraternally down it, arm in arm, with caps on the back of their heads, bedecked with flags, and singing in loud, cheery voices:

Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag,
And smile, boys, smile!
Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag
And smile, boys, that's the style!
What's the good of worrying?
It never was worth while!
Then, pack up your troubles in your old kit bag,
And smile, smile, smile!

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* THE FRENCH REPUBLIC
THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF PARIS
PEOPLE OF PARIS

It is Victory, triumphant Victory; on all the fronts, the enemy, vanquished, has laid down his arms; blood will cease to flow.

Let Paris lay aside the proud reserve which has won for her the admiration of the world.

Let us give full rein to our joy, to our enthusiasm, and let us restrain our tears.

In order to express our unbounded gratitude to our brave soldiers and their incomparable chiefs, let us decorate all our houses with the colours of France and with those of our dear allies.

Our dead may rest in peace; the sublime sacrifice which they have made of their lives for the future of the race and the salvation of the country, will not be in vain.

For them, as for ourselves, "the day of Glory has arrived."

Long live the Republic!

Long live Immortal France!

Signed .....

I was just saying to myself that when I came abreast of them I would stop and pass the time of day when, all of a sudden, out of a tiny *estaminet,* where they had been indulging in a cheering cup, rushed seven jovial poilus, also in a fraternal frame of mind. When they saw the Englishman and the American, their comrades in arms, their allies, their dear brothers, there was a quick *"En avant mes enfants!"* from one of them, then a dash, and then, with true French élan, the two unfortunate men were seized, forcibly embraced with seven pairs of strong French arms, and kissed as many times on both cheeks. The two Anglo-Saxons, with properly outraged feelings, put up a stiff fight for freedom, but to no purpose. I saw the incensed Tommy wipe his face disgustedly with his coat sleeve, as he spluttered: "Oh, I sy you blighter, cawn't you keep your blooming——!" and his words were swallowed up in another unsolicited embrace; while the Sammy, perhaps just a wee bit less inarticulate with rage than his more reserved brother, but none the less vigorous in his protests, shouted: "Gee, Froggy, if you kiss me again I'll pound your silly head into a doughball!" The poilus, not understanding one word of what was said to them, and being in far too jolly a frame of mind to be affected by mere frowns, continued to dance round their two helpless victims, and I, realizing that they were probably none too pleased to have a fellow Anglo-Saxon forming an amused audience, made a hasty retreat, in sheer pity. But it really was a funny scene.

. . . . . .

The signing of the Armistice changed the face of many things, among others it opened up vast new fields of work, for there was plenty to do in the large areas now freed forever from the hated presence of the enemy. The committee with which I was working asked me to go up to the Département du Nord on a tour of inspection, with a view to establishing a depot for civilian relief in that devastated region. So, towards the end of November, I started out on one of the saddest, but also one of the most interesting trips which I have had since the war began. The *camionette* my committee gave me for the journey (which was to last about a week) was a Ford—everything on wheels at that time seemed to be a Ford, at least to my unscientific eye, and the driver was a young French girl in the motor service section of the committee. We had a strange load, and must have looked more like travelling gypsies than anything else. First, we had to take all our food for the entire trip, for we were told we could not trust to finding any provisions at all during the better part of our journey. We also had to take our bedding, for we did not know whether we should find any sheltering roof, or be obliged to sleep in the car out under the stars at night. We took a supply of candles, lanterns, matches, electric torch refills, all our petrol for the entire trip, innumerable tires, inner tubes—in fact anything and everything that could possibly be needed for ourselves or the car. In addition to this we took all we could cram in, by way of warm clothing (especially

for children), blankets and condensed milk, for although this was officially only a tour of inspection, we wanted to distribute what we could, in certain prearranged districts of the North, where, as yet, little relief had been sent. When we had completed our packing and were at last ready to start, we looked ruefully at the springs of the poor old Ford,—they were almost flat! A nice cheering spectacle with a week's lonely trip ahead of us! Nothing daunted, however, we determined to risk it, our sporting instincts being thoroughly aroused, and we left Paris shortly after noon one bright, late November day, deciding that the first stage of our trip should be by Beauvais, Amiens. This, we were told, would be over fairly good roads, beyond that the route was to be decided when the time came; no one could tell us what route to follow after Amiens had been passed.

Our first day's trip was more or less uneventful. We sighed with relief in passing through Beauvais to see the beautiful cathedral unscathed. As we drew towards Amiens the wide rolling country was more and more scarred by the familiar, long waving lines of trenches, cut deeply and cruelly into the face of the earth for miles and miles, and, of course, the inevitable blown-up bridges became more frequent. We reached Amiens after dark, found the only hotel left intact completely given over to military purposes, as was practically the whole town, and my little French driver began to be worried as to what we were to do next, especially with the car. I, however, knowing I was in the English sector, felt thoroughly and happily at home, and nothing daunted, marched up to the first khaki-clad N. C. O. I saw and told him we needed his help. With my usual good luck I had, by chance, fallen upon a secret service man, a delightful person, who, of course, knew all the possibilities (and impossibilities!) of Amiens at that time. It was lucky for us that we found him, for he assured us that he only knew of one house in the whole town where we could get any sort of a room and that was semi-destroyed, without windows and with many shrapnel holes in the roof. With that silent courtesy which is peculiar to the British, he left not a stone unturned till he had got us safely lodged, fed, and our car put up for the night, and he was up at dawn the next morning to see us on our way. We were advised to take the Albert, Bapaume, Cambrai road as being the least impassable; and as we wanted to get, by nightfall, as far as the little village of Avesnes-le-Sec, some distance north of Cambrai, we felt that we must go by the surest way.

This day's journey was one long horror, and I turn sick at the recollection. The only things to keep the balance, the whole long, weary way, were the frequent friendly groups of Tommies, mostly R. E.s, which we met at intervals all along the road, and to all of whom we waved or called a greeting; and the huge, business-like, British motor lorries which splashed by, or the long trains of magnificent artillery, with guns, spotless and shining, as only the British know how to keep them. We had not

gone very far beyond Amiens, when the real devastation began in all its grim reality, and the day being dark and gloomy, intensified the tragedy of what we saw. The farther north we got the more the horror grew. Before we had reached Albert practically all vegetation had disappeared; no grass, no shrubs, no trees; the face of the earth, as far as the eye could reach, a vast desolation of mud, noisome black mud, everywhere, and in this mud, half floating, the ghastly relics of war. Gun wagons, shot to pieces, told the tale of a large toll of human life; abandoned tanks floundered like great invertebrate monsters in the slime of a primeval world, and out across the rotting waste, here and there as we covered mile after mile, huddled groups of charred and blackened stumps of trees, lifting shell-splintered ghostly arms in silent protest, where in happier days, shady forests had once grown. A few shapeless mounds were all that was left to mark the spot of some once prosperous village, where hearth fires had burned and happy families had gathered. Even the piled up bricks and stones were invisible, so covered were they with the earth thrown up by the terrible explosions. Often, too, where some small hillock reared its head painfully out of the surrounding quagmire of decay, we passed little solitary graves, each with a simple wooden cross, a name scratched rudely upon it, and a helmet placed reverently at its foot—another hero who had followed the "long, long trail." Oh, those little lonely graves of France, more eloquent far than the busy, hurrying ineffective lives of so many of us! Who, that has ever seen them, can forget their mute appeal, their whisper that we too one day must pass alone and undaunted through the silent gate of death. The whole region beggars description. Much that is graphic has been written by cleverer pens than mine, but I think you have to *see* a battlefield to realize it; no writing, no painting, no photograph even can any more than suggest the reality.

As we passed through Albert, we could only bow our heads and be silent. Of this once large and prosperous town, hardly a wall was left standing. I saw most of the destroyed towns and villages of eastern Belgium in the early days of the war, but nothing more complete in its desolation than this.

A little way before we reached Bapaume, we had a puncture, a bad one, and my little French driver declared it would be an hour or more before we could start on again. Knowing absolutely nothing about an automobile, and my presence being, therefore, entirely superfluous, I decided to do some exploring on my own account. We had stopped at a place in the road where, to the northwest, I noticed a mile or two of rising ground, so I set out in that direction. It was by now early afternoon, but the day was dark, and a low thick fog was beginning to gather. The ground grew drier as I climbed the gentle slope, the water had had a chance to drain off, so that going was not so bad. But the fog grew denser as I mounted and suddenly, without any warning, I found myself

in a whole settlement of small dugouts burrowing gloomily into the side of the hill, their mouths gaping greedily open, as if to swallow up any intruder. There they were, row after row, at regular intervals, while all about on the ground between, lay the things which the hastily retreating Germans had thrown down only a few short weeks before—battered helmets, broken rifles, cartridge cases, water bottles, an old coat here, a worn-out pair of shoes there, all telling of hurried departure. As I stood there looking about me, it seemed so easy to reconstruct the whole scene as it must have looked but a few weeks earlier. The quiet was intense, with that peculiar hush which always comes with dense fog, the hush which wraps you round in heavy folds and cuts you off as though by millions of miles from all familiar, homely things. I might have been standing on some distant war-scarred planet, so utterly alone did I feel. I wandered on as though in a strange dream, peering down into the dugouts as I went, finally screwing up my courage (and it needed about all I could muster) to go down into some of them. Inside, the picture of daily life, cut short by hurried flight, was even more living than outside,—a crude table with a half-burnt-out candle, a scattered pack of cards, a broken cup. On the wall a nail or two with a fragment of a cracked mirror hanging dismally by a string; in the corner a rough bed of planks; on the floor a broken bayonet, a few empty cartridges, a pair of soleless boots—a strange medley, each piece left where last put down, as though the user had been suddenly spirited away by some bad fairy. It gave me an eerie feeling, and if a mouse had so much as squeaked, I should have rushed away anywhere in a blind panic. I wonder why it is that we can be alone in a desert, or on a mountain top, or anywhere with nature, and glory in the silence and stillness, in the freedom of lone-ness; but put most of us down alone in some deserted haunt of man, with man's personal belongings scattered about, but man himself gone, no one knows where—well, anyway, my nerves won't stand it!

I continued, wandering about, in and out between the dugouts, half wondering if I should meet some stray German, left behind by mistake, and at last I came to a small open space, which at the first glance puzzled me, but looking more closely I saw that it was a field shoeing station; there, in orderly rows, stood the posts, driven deep into the ground, where the horses had been tied; there stood the anvil still in place, and by its side a few half-broken tools. I wondered where the blacksmith was now, if he had got safely away, leaving his tell-tale anvil behind him, or if he had paid the great price. I had long before this completely lost track of the time, and I suddenly awakened to the fact that I had a car and a driver waiting for me somewhere down there in the hollow, while I wandered up here in the clouds and mist. So I hurried back in what I hoped was the right direction, for the fog made all things strange and unnatural, and, finally, after many times falling into shell holes, and slipping many times down muddy banks, I got back to the car, which was by now almost ready.

Off we spun again, trying to make up our lost time, through Bapaume which was a terrible repetition of Albert, and on towards Cambrai. The country was rapidly getting a slightly less evil look, the miles and miles of mud and slime had been broken by gradually increasing stretches of grass and trees here and there. The poor dishonoured earth was still dreadfully disfigured with great shell holes, gunpits, trenches, but began to have some distant resemblance to the earth we knew and felt familiar with.

It was pitch black night by the time we reached Cambrai, and we discovered that we had another puncture, but with the help of the ubiquitous Tommy, and some good advice from the Town Major, we were soon on our way again. This last lap of our journey was the worst we had had as far as roads went, for after Cambrai we had to leave the high road, which had, on the whole, been kept in a fairly good state of repair by the R. E.s. We were obliged simply to crawl along, for every few yards great shell holes yawned ahead of us, and the ruts made by the continual stream of motor lorries, artillery detachments and what not, were so deep that we lurched ominously from side to side. It was too dark for us to see much of the country to right or left, but the road ahead of us looked dismal enough, and to add to the depression, enormous rats kept dashing across our path, lit up for the moment by our headlights, their black shadows magnifying their real size to terrifying proportions. It was getting very late by this time, and the roads, for the most part, now that we had left the main thoroughfare, very confusing. We had long since ceased to meet the friendly Tommies who had helped us all through the day's journey, and we were beginning to feel terribly lost and strange, two lone women out there in the night. Suddenly, at a sharp turn in the road, we almost bumped into an overturned lorry, half in, half out of a ditch, and a few yards away, sitting round a bonfire, two of the familiar khaki figures. My heart leaped at the welcome sight, and I called out eagerly: "I say, boys, we've lost our way, can you tell us where we are?" I did not realize how strange a sound it would be to them, a woman's voice, at that time of the night, there in that desolate region, calling to them in their own mother tongue. As if electrified they sprang to their feet, and came stumbling over the rough ground to the side of the car, eagerly pressing against it, their honest young English faces alight with pleasure. (How often, in the years to come, we shall all look back and remember those free and unselfconscious days of the war, when people we had never seen before came to us in the guise of old and tried friends, when the hard facts of life had taught us the wisdom of discarding our outworn wrappings of useless reserve.) "Oh you dear boys," I said when we had finished peering earnestly at each other in the darkness, "it is lucky for us that we found you, here in this lonely spot, for we want to go on to Avesnes-le-Sec, and we don't know which way to turn, and no Englishman has ever yet failed to help me

out of a difficulty." They smiled a good broad English smile and soon explained the false turning we had taken and how we could right ourselves, but I could see that they hated to have us go on and leave them there. They had not seen an English speaking woman for months, and their hearts were hungry for a woman's sympathy. They had ditched their lorry by mishap the day before, and were waiting till help could be sent and their great lorry pulled out on to the road again. So we talked and talked, of dear old "Blighty"; and one of them told me of his mother waiting for him in far Cornwall, and the other of his sweetheart whom he hoped to marry as soon as he was demobilized; and we all exchanged confidences there in the night, like old friends, reunited. At last, reluctantly, we shook hands and said good-night. "Good-bye, God bless you," I called, as they started slowly back to their bonfire, two lonely figures in that vast lonely waste, and then, impulsively: "Saint George and Merrie England!" I cried, as we pulled out into the dark. They stood at attention when they heard that, saluted, and then were lost to sight, swallowed up in the night. The whole episode lasted less than a quarter of an hour, I suppose, but it is a vivid memory that I love to dwell on.

We finally got to our destination, worn out, but glad that we had won through. The beautiful, but semi-destroyed chateau where we spent the night, was also our headquarters for the three or four days while I was making my investigation of the surrounding cantons, the need of relief, and so forth. I distributed the blankets, clothing and condensed milk which we had been able to bring, but of course, they were a mere drop in the bucket in the midst of so much suffering. In the three cantons which I toured (comprising in all forty-two communes or villages), most of these villages were at least semi-destroyed, some almost completely so, and all, without exception, had been systematically pillaged. Most of the inhabitants had been evacuated during the final push, but were now coming back slowly, painfully, to their mutilated, empty houses, with winter coming on and nothing to face it with save indomitable courage. I made up my mind that if my committee would back me, if they could send the necessary supplies (and I knew they would if they could); I would come back to the devastated North just as quickly as my report on my trip had been turned in, and face the winter with these poor, shivering, half-clad civilians, the victims of a war they did not seek.

We returned to Paris by way of Douai, Arras (poor scarred Arras!), Doulens, and so forth, and all the way our hearts were torn by the streams of returning refugees, old men and women, and little whimpering children, all too old or too young to bear such misery, yet mostly, with fixed determined faces, hoping against hope that when they came to their journey's end they would find some semblance of a house left, where they could painfully gather up the broken threads, and piece together a shadow of their former life. This was France, unconquered and unconquerable France.

The work that the British army did among these returning refugees was perfectly magnificent. A regular transport service was organized (a few weeks later than the date of which I write); the great motor lorries, so recently used for purposes of war, were now turned to the re-establishing of peace conditions. The high roads were filled with these huge *camions,* rumbling along, laden with their human freight; whole families, several at a time, being repatriated. It saved many a long exhausting march for the weary feet, and the Tommy was at his best helping the women and children to make themselves comfortable on their long jolting ride.

In little more than a week after I returned to Paris, I was back again in the North, this time to settle down for the winter. My committee, as usual, gave lavishly, and promised more later, in the way of clothing, shoes, bedding, and so forth. I made my headquarters in one of the small mining towns, where I hoped that later, when trains began to run, and transport became less of a problem, I could easily get my cases of supplies up from Paris. But I had another reason as well. There were many British troops stationed in and about the town, and I knew that this would mean unlimited help in my work in case of need. Later developments showed me to have guessed right. My new work lay over a fairly wide area, for I had two cantons, which meant twenty-three villages to supply. My same old Ford car (with another driver) was given me to take me and my wares about from village to village, and I lost no time in getting to work. When I had got my first lot of cases unpacked and the clothing and so forth sorted, I began the round of my villages. In each one, I visited in turn the *Curé* and the *Maire;* told them what I had come to do and asked them to make up, together, a list of the most needy families in their village, and that on a certain fixed day I would come with my *camionette* filled with warm things and make a distribution. By consulting, in this way, the representatives of both the church and the state, I felt I got a more impartial list of the neediest families, for each could consult with the other and thus no special favourites would be presented, regardless of real indigence. All this preliminary work took a great deal of time, for the French are a talkative as well as a hospitable people, and in most cases, before I succeeded in pinning down either the *Curé* or the *Maire* to real discussion as to the needs of their village folk, I had to listen to complete and detailed histories of their war experiences, washed down with cup after cup of strong, black coffee. How it chances that I still have any nerves left in me after so long a time spent in coffee drinking, I never have been able fully to explain to myself. It may be wondered, too, how coffee came to flow so freely in the devastated North, but the average French family will have coffee if it has nothing else, and large quantities had been either hidden away before the evacuation, and then unearthed again on their return, or else they took away

with them such stores as they could carry, bringing back what they had not used. Once I had made the preliminary tour of all my villages, things went quicker. Each week had its program, the mornings and afternoons being devoted to distributions in certain villages by pre-arranged schedule. These distributions were in many different sorts of buildings, according to whether the commune was badly damaged, or only partially so. Sometimes they would be in the half-destroyed village church (and, oh! it *was* cold those days, with the snow and sleet driving in); sometimes in a tiny room at the house of the *Curé,* a room with a red hot stove (all available fuel being used in honour of *la Dame Américaine*), all the windows hermetically sealed, and the entire village, men, women and children, crowded into it. I could never quite make up my mind which ordeal required the most courage, but I think, on the whole, much as I detest being frozen, I preferred the roofless churches, with their stone floors and snow drifts, to the breathless, if hospitable, interior of the good *Curé.*

That winter was terribly severe, and the suffering intense. For the most part, a kind of community life was carried on in the villages—a sort of pooling of interests; that is, if on returning to their villages three families found their houses completely demolished, while a fourth family rejoiced in a house comparatively intact, the four families would all huddle into the one habitable house, and at least have some sort of roof over their heads. One saw often what appeared to be evidence of great luxury amid the most squalid surroundings. For instance, a young peasant woman in a certain village, daily appeared dressed in a very handsome fur coat, and yet I knew she lived in a leaky house and had practically nothing left. It turned out that when she had been evacuated from her village, she had been ill in bed, and too weak to carry away anything; that some well-to-do woman had taken pity on her and given her the fur coat,—but it was all she had, no dress, no petticoat kept her decently clad underneath; the fur coat betokened luxury but in reality was only a shield for the utmost want.

It was desperately hard to get the things out quickly enough to my villages. As hard as I could work, as quickly as I could distribute, there were always fresh crowds waiting for me, and clamouring for warm clothing. Of course I went over and over again to each village, for the refugees kept streaming back, and, whereas one week I would perhaps find one hundred people newly returned, the following week I might find that two or three hundred more had come back and were waiting for relief.

As the winter wore on, it was wonderful to see signs of returning industry in this stricken area. When I first came, there was not even a cake of soap to be bought, or a candle or provisions of the simplest sort (except in the B. E. F. Canteens, not available for the French civilians). Now small shops began to open, with various useful supplies; the coal mines, almost without exception deliberately put out of commission by

the Germans before they retreated, now began to work again (a very few of them), on a greatly diminished scale it is true (only a very small part of some of the mines being workable), but at least there was a start made which heartened the people tremendously. Most wonderful of all, a few stray cows appeared at long intervals, a hen or two, and perhaps a goat. The return of the domestic animals was the most cheering sight you could imagine, though in one case at least, it had its drawbacks. At the back of the house where I slept and had my meals, there was a kind of unkempt garden, and along toward the end of February the owner of the house transported, with great difficulty, from further south, three quiet, matronly hens, and a very noisy, self-important cock, and turned them loose in the garden, just under my bedroom window. The cock was a thorough-going Bolshevist, caring little for law and order, and he would begin to sing his morning song of hate at about 3 a. m., and keep it up till daylight. As I was working at least twelve hours a day, generally more, I naturally did not appreciate this nocturnal music, and I asked my host if he could not keep the creature locked up in a coop during sleeping hours, as he made night quite hideous for me. The good man gazed at me in polite astonishment, his look clearly expressing, "These Americans are a kind people, but there is no doubt that they are all quite mad!" and answered, "But how can you have any objection—don't you hear in it the voice of the victorious cock of France, that immortal bird, singing his song of triumph?" I confess I felt somewhat rebuked, but was diplomatic enough to keep silent. My common sense, however, whispered that perhaps we cannot all be poetic at three o'clock in the morning, especially on top of a twelve or fourteen hour day.

Another most cheering sight was that work in the fields began here and there, in fact an effort was being made to return to the old life of pre-war days.

But the time was slipping by; the days had passed unnoticed into weeks, and the weeks, as unheeded, into months, and one day we woke to the fact that the terrible winter was past, and spring, with its promise of better things, had come. My hour of leaving grew near, my work had come to an end, for, quite suddenly, to my surprise, I realized that I had been working among my villages for nearly five months. Regular government supplies were by now beginning to stream in, in enormous quantities, and of course other *œuvres,* such as the C. R. B. and the Red Cross, had long been on the spot, so that there was no longer any need of work on a smaller scale such as ours. I made a final round of my twenty-three villages,—rather a sad journey, for I had many warm friends; then one last distribution in the town where I had my supply depot (with a kind of farewell ceremony), and then, early one glorious spring morning, the end of April, when hope was in the air, and a promise of returning life, I left the devastated North of France.

. . . . . .

People often ask me what, in retrospect, are the strongest impressions I have retained of that region of gloom and depression after the great tide of war had for the last time receded. It is always hard to choose any single impression when one's whole mind is so full of sad recollections; but I think the memory which will haunt me the longest will be that of the *deadening influence* of the German occupation on the people of northern France. Apart from their silent endurance, which was the great heroic note illuminating those terrible four years, there will always remain the bitter recollection of atrophied sensibilities, of arrested mental growth. One could, perhaps, forgive it to a certain extent in the older people, but it was hard to see and bear in the younger generation. One observed it in all sorts of ways. It was continually being forced on one's attention, unexpectedly, for one never got used to it. They moved slowly and with an air of caution, if not of open suspicion; they had the hunted look of the animal at bay; they disliked committing themselves to any definite statement, as though they feared being forced to retract to save themselves from some unjust penalty. Even sight and hearing were no longer what it should be in normal people. For instance, it was a very common experience that in going about the country as we did, we could with difficulty make any one, walking in the road ahead of us, hear our approach, and get out of the way. They never seemed to hear, quickly, the sound of our *camionette* as it pounded up behind them, making a tremendous racket on the rough roads. Even our horn could often only with difficulty attract their attention, but once their attention *was* attracted, they would spring nervously to one side like someone startled out of a deep sleep. Again, one often had to repeat one's question or one's remark several times, before the meaning seemed to dawn on them. Whereas, in Lorraine or in Paris, the customary Latin quickness of perception was all it had ever been, before the war,—here in the North, which had been cut off for such a weary stretch of years from the rest of the mother country, a kind of apathetic dullness had seemed to settle down upon the people. It is well known that the Germans were much harder taskmasters in the North of France than they were, even in Belgium (after the first terrible year), chiefly, it is supposed, because they expected to keep Belgium for their own, and wished to win the confidence of the people, while in France they wanted to make as much out of it as they could while they had it in their grip. One example of this was that the moment you passed the frontier into Belgium, the cattle, poultry, and so forth, so conspicuously absent in northern France, especially during those first months after the Armistice, were fairly plentiful. One hears much about the destruction of towns and villages, of the almost irretrievable damage to immense areas of beautiful, fertile, country, so that for perhaps a generation nothing can grow there; it cannot, for perhaps half a century, be the home of man. Modern science has certainly helped to make the crime against nature in this war greater than in

any war in history; this is true enough, and one's heart aches at the memory of such utter ruin. But whoever has seen the hunted look in the eyes of the people of the devastated North of France, will never again rest quite so comfortably in his bed at night. The German occupation lasted too long for the marks to fade for many years to come. I have faith, however, that this cloud will in time pass away, especially from the minds of the younger people, even if it continues to darken the horizon of the older and less quickly changing ones, for the French have a wonderful power of recuperation, and work to rebuild their lost homes, to till their own fields again, will hearten them and give them back their self-respect. And so, if ever I chance to return to my old haunts, may it be my good fortune to see, with my own eyes, the effects of the curse of war gone forever from the long suffering, patient peasant folk.

As an offset to this gloomy picture, there is another memory, quite as strong but of a different colour,—the British! What the British army was in the North of France, only those who have seen it at work can begin to realize. After it had swept the German army out of that part of the country, it went to work in its usual imperturbable, business-like way to sweep away the taint, mental, moral and physical, which the German army had left behind it. It was not only that it improved the sanitary conditions of the towns, that it gradually gathered up and carted away the inevitable refuse of war (I suppose most armies of occupation do that); but its real value was that it came as a mighty balance wheel of calm and moderation, a great beneficent leaven of common sense, good nature, evenness of temper, to the overwrought nerves of the harassed people. I do not mean to say that the average French peasant pretends to understand the Tommy and his diffident manner. Perhaps he does not even try to understand it, so different is it from his own. But the sense of bedrock justice which the British brought, of tolerance, above all, the undying instinct of "fair play" so typical of the Anglo-Saxon, had its unrecognized effect. The very unemotionalism of the British was beneficial even if little understood. The Englishman has an instinctive dislike of the *beau geste*. If he has anything to do, he never says: "Now watch me do it,"—somehow it just gets done, and that is all there is to it. It seems very simple indeed to the Englishman, but of course perfectly unaccountable to the Frenchman. None the less, it was the very best influence that the North of France could have had after its four years of bondage; and though another foreign army (even if an ally) was often a cause of irritation to the ordinary peasant, the more educated saw below the surface, and feel a debt of gratitude which I hope time will never obliterate. The Tommy was everywhere. When off duty he walked in the street or sat on the doorstep playing with the French children, holding them on his knee, carrying them on his broad comfortable shoulders, letting them pull his hair (and what child does not fall a victim to the charm of pulling the hair of a real soldier in uni-

form!). Or he dropped in of an evening to smoke a cigarette and drink a cup of the inevitable coffee in some peasant home, and an enjoyable evening was passed on both sides,—though goodness only knows how any conversation flowed, for the French of the average man in the ranks is a marvel of hiccoughs and grunts, while of course the French peasant of the North does not know two consecutive words of English. But a good natured smile from an honest face goes a long way, and a silent bond sprang up which was a language of the most lasting kind. And back of the Tommy stood the British officer who, as every one knew, superintended the improvements which were seen growing on all sides,—the officer with the indifferent and sometimes even cold manner, but who never failed to be on hand when needed, or to see that the improvements were carried through.

What the British army was to me personally, words fail to describe. I only know that without it I could never have done my work in the North. Although I was an American woman, working with an American Committee for the French, and having, therefore, absolutely no claim on the generosity of the British, it was nevertheless the British who made my work possible. If I broke a spring of my car, which happened often as a result of bad roads and unavoidable overloading, it was the British army which mended it for me, often at great inconvenience (though this I always had to find out afterwards, for myself, as I should never have known it from them). If my car broke down completely, or my driver fell ill (as happened twice), the British army gave me a *camion* and a driver, so I could go on with my work unhindered. When I could get no petrol to run the car, the British army supplied it. The British army re-soled my shoes when I had walked holes in them, mended the broken mainspring of my only watch, fed me when I could get nothing else to eat but mule meat,—in fact, if there was anything the British army could not or would not do, all I can say is, I never discovered it. But knowing the average Briton's dislike of being thanked, I never was so indiscreet as to any more than hint at what I felt. I think my many English friends among both officers and men knew what I thought about them, and if I loved England before the war, I love and admire her ten thousand times more now.

Some one here in the Middle West, where I am temporarily stopping, said to me the other day: "Oh, you should have been in America when we came into the war! The wave of idealism which swept over the country at that time would have been a perfect revelation to the British, for we all know that they only went into the war to protect themselves; there was no serious ideal back of what they did." I confess I "saw red" for a moment, and then the mists of anger cleared away, and I saw in memory, as though branded for ever on my brain, those massed ranks of the "old Contemptibles" as, splendid, battalion after battalion, they swung through the streets of London in the early days of 1914, on their way overseas, out to what was in so many cases certain

annihilation. I can never hear "Tipperary" without a sob in my throat—we heard it so often in those vivid, early days when Britain's best and bravest rose, like a fiery barrier, and gave themselves, a willing sacrifice, because a little sister nation had been trampled upon. If there was no idealism then, the world will never see it. Another thing,—it has often been said to me, both abroad (on the continent) and in America, that England has known nothing of this war because her country has not been invaded; but anyone who has suffered from the severity of the rationing alone (not to mention any of the many other hardships which the people of Great Britain have had to face), could never make such a statement as that. Mrs. Malaprop's sagacious remark that "comparisons are odorous" is not forgotten by me at this moment, and I am in no sense trying to assert that England suffered more or even in the same way that her allies did, but that she suffered *just as much,* in her *own way* is beyond the shadow of a doubt. Take, as example, just one of the many things which the civilians of Great Britain had to go without. If any one remembers through the autumn and winter of 1917-18, the long and pathetically patient queues of women waiting, often with young babies in their arms, out in the cold and rain, hours at a time, for their tiny weekly ration of butter (which was often margarine by the way)—too small a ration to seem worth the effort; and then remembers that you only had to cross the channel, and that in almost any of the unoccupied territory you could get all the butter you wanted—well, it makes you stop and think! There is nothing particularly heroic in going without butter, and you have not the satisfaction of a noble deed well done when you feel yourself underfed in general; but when you bear this discomfort almost without complaint, as was the case in England, with very few exceptions, there is something great in it. Let those who have not tried it try it now! Many, many examples of the silent, patient suffering of the people of Great Britain are known to those who were there to see and share, but even to touch on them, ever so lightly, would fill volumes.

And so I think it behooves us all to remember that, as each one of us sees the war from some peculiar angle of his own, so each one of the Allies, fighting for the great cause, has had its own peculiar tragedy to face, and that success or failure has all depended upon how the tragedy was surmounted. Whether Armistice came too soon, whether we shall have much of our work to do over again, who among the wisest of us can say? But this at least we can try to do: we, the Allies, can each make a special effort to learn and understand what our various partners in this great war have done, and forget for a few valuable minutes what we have done ourselves; we can forget our own important rôle, and try to realize how ineffective it might have been had it not been for the support of our associates. I think a little of this self-examination would be very salutary, and no doubt would go far to help each one of us along "The Path" of our national life. T. D.

PLAIN, COMMON, OR GARDEN GRATITUDE

A GROUP of people were discussing the question whether humanity owed gratitude to the Powers that be—or not. A great many things were being said on the negative side, for the talkers were not students of the Wisdom, and for all others the negative side is a strong one. The walls were still ringing with the defiant cries of one doughty ingrate—"If *my* consent had been asked, I would have spurned with contempt the offer of such a life as this," and Echo had answered mockingly "as *this.*" Then someone spoke, whether it was an original remark or a quotation I do not know—"If there were no other cause for gratitude, the first kiss, the colour blue, and the chord of the dominant seventh would furnish it for me." It was one of those unforeseen gleams that *will* drift through arid chatter like a firefly through a cellar, a better prayer than most prayers, and recognized as such by the silence that fell. Some of us were staring appalled at the discrepancies the words disclosed between royal largesse and our own feebly intermittent efforts, not to repay—that were laughable—but even to be gracious. Love, Colour, Music, just to start the list; we thought of a life from which they should be abstracted, and the mental transition from the wonder of our blessings to the poverty of our response, made itself. A man may make up his mind that he does not love God, but at least he might have the decency to "say grace."

There is one thing about Theosophy—you *must* think. The laziest-minded student relinquishes once for all any comfort that may be extracted from cheap, rough-and-ready indictments of segments of the scheme. He has no time to sit about protesting that he does not like it, and the consciousness that he was born to make his little individual efforts to "set it right" may not be enlivened by any invocations to "cursed spite."

I, for one, began with shame to ponder my reasons for gratitude. But where to begin? Where to end? I am grateful for sunlight through leaves, for the shapes of birds, and for the Logos; I am grateful for jade water lapping stone steps, for rides on the top of the bus, and for leaping, spurning Kundalini; I am grateful for the fun in things and for the tears, for all the dear little meals where love is, and for the means of grace and hope of glory; for a curve in a certain pine wood where a brown pool rests, and for pain in the past; for friends who gather into their dear hands my leading strings and will not let me stray; for the golden radiance of an Altar that is the home of my spirit, and for—

and most of all—the Prisoner of Love Who makes the Altar and all the rest possible.

> O, if this Love might cloak with rags His glory,
> Laugh, eat and drink, and dwell with suffering men,
> Sit with us at our hearth, and hear our story,
> This world—we thought—might be transfigured then.
>
> "But Oh," Love answered, with swift human tears,
> "All these things have I done, these many years."

We are the custodians of the "Prisoner of Love"—all of us—we cannot escape that; our choice is only between neglect or recollection, cruelty or love. Stone walls do not a prison make nor iron bars a cage, but stony hearts and unbroken wills can detain and balk a god. A voluntary prisoner, who pleads—for what? That love, after many days, may beget love. It is just conceivable that some do not love Him—yet; but it is inconceivable that any of us remain ungrateful.

Do we turn over our poor possessions to find something fit to offer Him? This memory?—a little shopworn thing! This resolution? No, broken, broken! This effort that cost so much? Unclean! unclean! But then He asks so little to begin with, this imprisoned lover. A cup of cold water, a leaf, a flower,—as a child writes down a Santa Claus list, so does He leave His lists around for us to start with. See the cunning of it! In this way we may be lured to form the habit of carrying our treasures into safety. And they must have His Name upon them, too, that all may be rendered fairly. With the putting of the Name, the faded memory will glow again, the resolution will be whole once more, and the intention purified of self. Then, too, and it is hard to get this into the understanding of our hearts, He likes us to bring all sorts of little rubbishy things, things like fears and irritations and doubts, like "poverties, wincings, and sulky retreats"—He can do marvels with such small truck. "By-and-by, when I am big, I shall buy you a grand carriage and a house," the child says to its mother, but in the meantime Love loves the little muddled letters and samplers, with their crooked letters and their tear stains. So, by-and-by, oh patient Master, we shall grow up,—we will write you songs, will paint you pictures, will labour in Your vineyard, and the harvest shall be Yours. And while we grow we will be grateful, and love shall beget love.

What is gratitude anyway? It is not a virtue, it is a grace. Without it we are graceless. Before we ask for the Love of God and the Fellowship of the Holy Ghost, we ask for the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that our insensitiveness may be touched to feeling, our coldness to warmth, our gracelessness to beauty. Its presence profoundly modifies our prayers. It lifts them from the "Polly wants a cracker" stage, where they unduly linger. We cease to pray humourless prayers to a God Who must have all the humour there is, to put up with us at all. We cease to bore Him with "vain repetitions," offering instead what He

pleads for, and what love has never yet been able to dispense with—incessant repetition; instead of the monotony of weariness, the monotony of passion—Holy! Holy! Holy!

It is a wonderful game of give and take that we are asked to play—this thing so many of us go about with such intermittent zest—a continuous process not of bargaining, but of wooing and consent. Our first move in the game is recollection—a beautiful word. You re-collect yourself, your scattering, wandering, dissipated self; you literally pull your*selves* together; your soul says to your body "now," and turning to the waiting God within, self is submerged in Self.

Have you ever watched a nice dog practise recollection toward its master? There are no noisy transports, no jumping and barking, no demands for this and that; but the dog will go very softly, often while human talk is in progress, and stand for a long time with his head pressed against his master's knee in utter quiet. I, for one, shall always believe he has "entered the silence"—a faithful dog's silence of dumb love, of adoration and faith and yearning. Presently he will be in transports that he must run in circles to express, and his master will approve that, too. He spends *some* of his time begging for bones, being but a dog; but he manages to express many other sentiments, among them gratitude and a deep preference for his master's presence above all others.

The Master would have us wear smooth the pathway that leads to Him. We must grow supple in turning, and that is why the practice of recollection is valuable long before it is potent. We linger in the awkward squad because we neglect our spiritual calesthenics. Turn we must, and tread the path, do it how we may. We must do it often, do it automatically, use the mantrams of others, start ourselves with sacred books, employ phrases of a warmth to which the heart is perhaps yet a stranger, light our passion from the passion of others—only *do* it. Sometimes the path is short and warm and sunny, one step and we are there. Again it stretches a grey dreariness, and the east wind blows down it. But it is the same path, and the Prisoner of Love keeps there His eternal tryst.

Think what careful recollection we practise for social purposes—at stupid dinner parties, for instance. Your hostess whispers for your guidance, "He is crazy about golf," or, "He knows all about irrigation in the West,"—and immediately you cast yourself a living sacrifice on the tin altar of social requirements without a groan or a protest. And you do well, for after all the poor altar stands for big things—for friendliness, for human meetings and the breaking of bread together, and all sorts of loveliness that humanity has a right to, and sometimes attains. We should do this and not leave the other undone.

True gratitude yearns to give something in return, and the rule here is to begin with what you have. Have you ever watched a mother

petition a very small baby for a drink from its bottle? All mothers do it; it is love's first tiny testing. A moral struggle at once starts in the baby—you can watch it as through a pane of glass. First it pretends not to understand. The higher and lower nature lock horns. Then it regards its mother with a long grave look of question—*Can* I give her any of this delicious stuff? Shall I get more if I recklessly give this away? Does she really need it? Suddenly the higher nature triumphs—to the glory of babyhood it triumphs—and with an adorable gesture of yielding love and the smile of an angel of charity, the little thing passes its horrid tube to its mother, who plays her comedy of gusto and gratitude. It is not for Mellin's food the mother pleads, but for love that will consent to sacrifice,—her own little human baby has yielded to the appeal of love and pity, and the first battle in the long, long war has been won.

I wonder if pessimism is simply ingratitude running amuck? A life of spiritual blindness following lives of uncorrected spiritual astigmatism? Come to think of it, how few really great pessimists there have been, after all. A great pessimist can only disclose himself to his generation by means of some form of art, and though strange and dreadful is the art that floats up from that dark pool where linger those who "wilfully dwell in sadness," its sum is not great. The Black Lodge must deplore the rarity of these invaluable messengers, whose united cry is like a sinister bell tolling eternally, "God is not Love, or, being Love, is powerless." On the other hand, lacking greatness, the Black Lodge sends out thousands of little foxes to steal our grapes. A child thinks to improve its picture by thick black strokes, and great artists have their little moods. When Yeats says, for instance, that we are only—

> The dreams the drowsy gods
> Breathe on the burnished mirror of the world,
> And then smooth out with ivory hands—and sigh!

he does not mean that God is not Love; he only means that a poet is taking a day off for a psychic spree. It is not permitted to say "thou fool" to one's brother, and pessimist is too serious a word to use lightly, though the silly public may be depended upon to shriek it at anyone who ventures to voice sane observation of suicidal moments in civilization. A genuine pessimist is a mystic—a Black Lodge mystic. Maya for him is not in the show itself, but in the scheme behind the show. An optimist is aware that the players are not yet part-perfect, but the pessimist is sure that the play is rotten.

Take the wonderful art of Thomas Hardy. Our gratitude for a great artistic achievement must not veil the perception that Hardy is that rare creature—a dyed-in-the-wool pessimist. He speaks somewhere of the "patient and placable human race," but seems to have no sense whatever of a patient and placable Divine Providence. Turning an anguished eye on the Karma of humanity, he lacks any alleviation that

comes from overseeing it. His point of view, granted his premises, is logical enough. To apprehend tragedy and frustration with luminous clarity, and yet lack the vision which relates them to some healing whole, is a dark fate for any man. To see the worlds, with that curious cosmic vision of his, whirling, unguided and unguarded through the wastes of space, is to see a dreadful thing. In Hardy's world there is little to be thankful for, for everything betrays, even love itself,—love most of all,—and simplicity and faith, innocence and generosity are but so many appetizers for the malign fates. In one or two of his later books (this sort of thing grows upon a man), destiny is so consistently peevish that we laugh in a sort of reaction. It is as though one should take a single day in school for the entire life process, and then choose a day in which you forget your lessons, fall down stairs, are slapped by the teacher, lose your lunch, have your hair pulled, ink your apron, "make faces" at the little boy in the next seat, are "called out of your name," and get bitten by the dog on the way home. All these things do happen, but not all at once to the same child. It is astonishing how plentifully the unbelieving man will deal disaster to his fellows. When unhappy Tess expiates her crime upon the gallows and Hardy remarks "The Aristophanes of Heaven had finished his jest with Tess," he registers the bitter sum of his bitter creed, and how hopelessly old-fashioned it sounds. Lacking the Divine Incarnations, "the Aristophanes of Heaven" might be a fair synonym for "Our Father Who art in Heaven."

As a little of what we owe the Masters slowly dawns upon us, we can be thankful that the Manvantara will furnish quite a few working days yet. In the meantime we can accord them the respite of our compunction, the courtesy of our cheerfulness, the grace of our gaiety.

If I have been too sombre, Lord,
For daffodils that light the Spring;
If I was all too dull to see
The wiser worship that they bring,
Lord, God of laughter and delight,
Remember not this thing.

If I have walked in April ways,
Too solemn and too grave, alas,
For all Thy mirthful, careless leaves,
Thy gay and gallant-hearted grass,
Lord, stay me till I learn to heed
Thy laughter where I pass.

And when there comes another Spring
Of tulips rising from the earth,
If I would go too darkly by
To sober things of lesser worth,
Lord, halt me where those pulpits are,
To hear Thee preaching mirth.

(Poem by David Morton.)

S.

"BY THE MASTER"

ISHA UPANISHAD

TRANSLATED FROM THE SANSKRIT WITH AN INTERPRETATION

II

That moves, That moves not; That is afar off, That is as if near. That is within all this; That is outside all this.

HERE, as always when it is a question of the Logos, a description can be given only in terms of paradox. One finds exactly the same thing in the Tao-Teh-King, on page after page, when Lao-Tse seeks to indicate the Way, which is his name for the nameless Mind of God. Thus, for example, one finds Lao-Tse saying: "Therefore those of old said: who has the light of the Way, seems wrapped in darkness; who has advanced along the Way, seems backward; who has mounted the Way, seems of low estate."

Perhaps the best solution of this problem of paradox can be given along the lines of that deeply intuitive half-Oriental, Bergson, who so constantly, and as unconsciously, approaches the thought and even the words of the great Upanishads. The Ultimate Reality, which Bergson, in this also following the Upanishads, calls the Life, approaches our consciousness in two ways, from two directions: inwardly, through the spiritual consciousness which Bergson calls the intuition; and outwardly, from the visible universe, through the material mind. The analysis of the material mind is, perhaps, Bergson's most valuable achievement. It is, he says, an instrument of consciousness, gradually built up in contact with the forms and forces of the material world, and exactly fitted, by its character and habit, to deal practically with the problems and situations of the material world, the world expressing itself in terms of time and space. But, just because the material mind is so perfectly adapted to this practical, material task, it is by the very reason of this perfect adaptation, quite unable to tackle successfully the problems of direct spiritual consciousness, of Reality. The dominant thought of Bergson is that, although the material mind is by its very nature unfitted to grapple with the problem of Reality, we are not for that reason cut off from the knowledge of Reality; on the contrary, the consciousness of the Real, the spiritual consciousness, which Bergson calls intuition, is the very heart and centre of our nature; the consciousness of Life, which is the consciousness of the Logos, is present within us perpetually.

We can easily work out in detail the contrast between these two forms of consciousness: intuition and the material mind, as Bergson himself does. Intuition perceives the universe as Life, the great forward movement of Being. The material mind sees the universe as a congeries of material forms, each material form having the air of permanence.

Bergson has found an apt simile for this contrast, in the films of moving pictures: the material mind sees the separate fixed pictures, as they are on the ribbon of the film; intuition, on the contrary, sees the picture on the screen, life, perpetually moving forward. Again, the intuition perceives Life as eternal duration; the material mind cuts life up into sections of time, past, present and future, which sections bear to each other exactly the relation of successive sections of the moving-picture film. Finally, intuition perceives Life as immediate, as present spiritual consciousness; while the material mind sees the universe projected in space; and, thus seeing it, is launched on an endless sea of contradictions. For example, when we think of the universe as extended in space, it is quite impossible for us, as Herbert Spencer pointed out, either to imagine a boundary at the outer edge of space, or to imagine space without a boundary. On considerations of this kind Herbert Spencer built his teaching of the Unknowable. Bergson replies in effect: Yes, unknowable, to the material mind, which was never intended to solve problems of that kind, but is simply a piece of practical machinery; unknowable to the mind, but easily knowable, and in fact already intimately known, by the intuition.

Applying Bergson's solution, we may now try to unravel the paradox of the Upanishad sentence thus:

"The Reality moves, because it is seen by the material mind projected in space; it moves not, because it is always present to the intuition, as spiritual consciousness, as Life. That is afar off, because the material mind projects Reality into space, in a universe which it is unable to conceive as either with or without boundaries. That is as if near, because it is within, as spiritual consciousness. That Logos is within all this, as the inner spiritual consciousness; it is outside all this, since the material mind conceives a universe extended in space, and containing everything that is in space."

Bergson clearly sees the antithesis between intuition and the material mind, as two modes of perception; the contrast between the "noëtic" action of intuition and the "psychic" action of the material mind. This is the strength of his philosophy. Its weakness lies in the fact that he is inclined always to see this antithesis in terms of perception, while the vital thing is, to see it in terms of action, as a moral rather than a mental problem. Either he does not see, or he does not make sufficiently clear, the fundamental truth that not merely the perceptive faculty of the material mind, but the whole lower, personal nature has been built up in contact with matter and the things of matter; that the whole personal nature is, therefore, false to reality; that the passions and desires and, above all, the dominating impulse of egotism, are the expression of this false building; and that this false building must come down, before the real dwelling-place of the soul can be built.

This unbuilding of the false lower nature, in order that the true

higher nature may be built up, is the fundamental task of our moral and religious life. It is the central work of the Mysteries; and the series of Initiations exists solely to carry this work into practical effect. It is, therefore, the theme which runs through all the great Upanishads, which are the records of the Mysteries, and of Initiation.

As a contrast to the purely mental antithesis between the intuition and the material mind which is so lucidly indicated by Bergson, we may quote an equally lucid statement of the same antithesis, this time in moral rather than mental terms; in terms of the will, rather than in terms of action:

"For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I work I know not: for not what I would, that do I practise; but what I hate, that I do. But if what I would not, that I do, I consent unto the law that it is good. So now it is no more I that work it, but sin which dwelleth in me. For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me, but to work that which is good is not. For the good which I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I practise. But if what I would not, that I do, it is no more I that work it, but sin which dwelleth in me. I find then the law, that, to me who would do good, evil is present. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me out of this body of death?" (Romans, 7, 14-24, Revised version with marginal readings.)

That is really the statement of our whole practical problem. The solution is, humbly and faithfully and through sacrifice, to co-operate with the powers of the manifested Logos, with the Masters, who are perpetually striving to work for us just this deliverance.

Mental understanding will amount to nothing, until it is consecrated by sacrifice. More than that, even a true mental insight, if not so consecrated, will presently be veiled and lost, the power of Maya once more asserting itself. Therefore the word "sin" comes closer to the heart of the matter than does Bergson's analysis of the material mind. The realization of sin is far more vital than the realization of mental illusion; and indeed the realization of mental illusion is only valuable because it may help to break down the self-sufficiency of the material mind, with its perpetual tendency to self-justification. But the real task is for the will, and it can be accomplished only through painful sacrifice.

But he who beholds all beings in the supreme Self (Atma), and in all beings beholds the supreme Self, does not seek to hide himself from That.

The kernel and centre of the lower nature, the "body of death," is egotism, the self-centred consciousness which practically believes itself

to be the centre of the universe, that for whose sake all things exist. Thus believing, thus practically worshipping self-satisfaction, the egotism will, in practice, sacrifice all other beings to itself; and will, so far as it is able, sacrifice the spiritual consciousness, which is in fact the power of the Logos, to the carnal consciousness.

There would seem to be two ways in which the egotism can be conquered: an apparent and temporary way, and a real and permanent way. The unreal and unenduring way is, without regard to the Logos, without regard to the law of God and holiness, to attempt to sacrifice the egotism to other people. As Lao-Tse dryly puts it: "When the Way (the immediate spiritual consciousness of the Logos, the Master) is lost, the form of virtue takes it place. When the lower virtue is lost, humanitarianism takes it place." The practical working-out of this unspiritual humanitarianism is seen in Socialism, in the abominations of Bolshevism, which has been rightly described as "Socialism in action." The reason is, that there has been no true sacrifice of egotism; the devil, only apparently cast out, returns, and brings "seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first."

The only lasting conquest is to sacrifice egotism to the divine consciousness of the Logos, to sacrifice self to the Master; and, thereafter, through the power and inspiration of the Logos, revealed in the penitent heart, to follow out in all things, not the will of self, but the will of the Logos.

In this way, the disciple finds the Logos, the supreme Self, Atma, within himself; and, finding the Logos there, and step by step coming to share in the consciousness and life of the Logos, he comes into some understanding of the depth and breadth of that great spiritual Life. He comes to realize that the Logos is in all things; that it is through the virtue of that presence, that all things exist and have their being; so that "all things were made through the Logos and without the Logos was not anything made that was made." Thus he "beholds all beings in the Logos, in Atma, and in all beings beholds the Logos." The practical application, the way in which the disciple should see the Master in all beings, has already been discussed in the commentary on an earlier verse.

With reference to the last words of the verse, it would be well to consider how far we do "seek to hide ourselves from" the Logos, the divine spirit, the Master. If we realize, even mentally, that the life of the Logos is not only the real Self of us, our most real Self, but is, in essence, full of divine beauty and goodness and truth, full of everlasting love and joy; then is it not true that we are in fact, if we cling to our personal selves, seeking to hide from divine beauty, from divine goodness, from divine truth and love and joy?

We need more faith; we need the faith to surrender ourselves, and to surrender with completeness.

In whom all beings have become as the Self of the enlightened, what delusion is there, what sorrow, for him beholding Oneness?

Fear lies at the very heart of egotism: the self's fear that it will be deprived of its desires, of its illusions of vanity and superiority, even of its very being. Fear and desire go hand in hand, and each desire has an equal shadow of fear. Self-centred egotism is small, and feels itself to be small, with an ever more restricted circle of life; and, shut up in this narrow cave, egotism is constantly on guard against apprehended attacks, for nothing is so vulnerable as vanity, which is the very breath of egotism. All this means misery, dread of loss, of suffering, of punishment, a haunting misgiving and apprehension.

But when egotism is sacrificed to the Logos; when, instead of the bitter waters of selfishness, the soul is refreshed with the waters of life, springing up in a living fountain in the heart, then the age-old spectre of fear is exorcised; dread ceases to haunt the dwelling, unless it be the wise and holy fear of falling short of the high perfection, the holy Life, which offers itself so generously to the cleansed heart. But that fear is in reality worship, and has nothing in common with the old egotistic dread.

In that holy Life, all the sorrows that dwell in the heart have their surcease, except the divine sorrow which is of the very essence of that great Life: the perpetual travail, the pain of bringing holiness into being, in obdurate human hearts; the burden of the age-old task, taken up when the Logos first entered into manifestation; the task more visibly assumed, when the Logos "becomes flesh and dwells among us."

He circled around the bright, bodiless, woundless, without tendons, pure, unpierced by evil; the wise Poet, all-encircling, self-being, disposing ends through perpetual ages.

Here, it would seem, is a part of the ritual depicting the Logos as the active Builder of the worlds, "running circular errands" through the celestial ether, which is "bodiless, woundless, without tendons, pure, unpierced by evil."

Western astronomy, while measuring with wonderful insight and patience, the circling motions of the planets in their orbits about the sun, and extending these measurements not only to the distances of the stars, but to their proper motion in space, has never even attempted to find any cause or source of these vast and endless movements. Laplace, perfecting his nebular hypothesis, thought of the solar system as at first a vast sphere of star-dust, rotating about an axis; gradual flattening and shrinking, forming rings, like the rings of Saturn, which in time, breaking up, became the planets. Laplace thought that, if the original impulse of rotation could be explained, he could then account for all the phenomena of the solar system. But no explanation of that original rotation was ever forthcoming, except, perhaps, those which based it upon the collisions of earlier suns; but, even then, the prior motions of these remained unaccounted for.

The Eastern wisdom offers no final explanation, since, penetrating deeper into the universal mystery, it finds only mystery more profound. But it does carry the problem farther back, behind the visible stars and the visible universe, to the manifested Logos, which, in turn, veils the unmanifested Logos. And in the principle of circulating life within the Logos, it sees the source and cause and model of all life-circuits, from the pulsating vital current throughout the solar system, or vaster star systems, to the circulation of blood in the human body, or in the body, let us say, of a humming bird.

The Power which "circled around the bright, bodiless, woundless" ether, or rather the Akasha, is called, in the Trans-Himalyan schools, Fohat, who is described as "running circular errands," these same paths of circulation, universal from the greatest to the least, which have just been indicated. Fohat is called "the wise Poet, Seer," for, in Sanskrit, the one word covers both thoughts; he is no true poet, who is not a genuine seer; he is no true seer, who does not turn his vision into creative action. This Power of the Logos is the Poet of the star systems, of the galaxies, of the suns; and of all organized life through all these systems, where all is Life. The universe is God's poem; the voice of Life is not a cry but a song. This is the universal testimony of the Mysteries of Initiation, throughout all ages, in all lands. This wise Poet disposes all purposes and aims, and the whole substance of being, with infinite wisdom, throughout perpetual ages.

They go forth into blind darkness, who worship unwisdom; but into darkness deeper than that, as it were, they who find delight in wisdom.

The traditional interpretation found in the Indian commentaries seeks to make the point that, while they who follow unwisdom go into the darkness of death and recurring birth, those who follow merely intellectual wisdom fall into even greater darkness of confusion.

But to the present commentator, this does not seem the true meaning; but rather that which is suggested in the verse of the *Bhagavad Gita:* "He who has attained self-mastery wakes where is night for all beings, and where all beings wake is night for the silent seer."

For, while it is true that those who follow after desire, completely deluded by the glamour of Maya, dwell in darkness and, in death, enter the path, not of liberation, but of bondage to Karma and recurring birth; no less true is it that the disciple, whose feet are set upon the path of wisdom and liberation, straightway enters a world which, to the deluded, is far deeper darkness; and it is just because the small old path, stretching far away, is so deeply encompassed with darkness, that the deluded shrink away from it in dread and horror, and therefore fail to see that it is the path of Light.

There is one thing, they have said, through wisdom; there is another thing, they have said, through unwisdom. Thus have we heard from the wise, who have taught us the spiritual teaching.

He who knows both, wisdom and unwisdom, he, verily, through unwisdom fording through death, through wisdom reaches the Immortal.

These two verses, which bear out the view already taken of the preceding verse, need little or no comment. Because of unwisdom, because of the delusion of Maya, because of self-centredness and bondage to personality, the majority of mankind pass through death, as men pass through the ford of a river; for such is the meaning of the word used. If they followed after wisdom, after aspiration, sacrifice, they would, even in this present life, attain to the world of immortality. Losing their lives, their personal, self-centred lives, for the sake of the Divine, they would keep them unto life everlasting. It is the teaching, old as the world, which is the very heart and essence of the great Mysteries; the secret of initiation, since the process of Initiation is that very losing, that sacrifice of the personal life, whereby the life immortal is gained and entered upon. And the practical thing would seem to be, not so much to accept this principle in a large, general way, as to carry it into effect in a multitude of little things; the little things which, like grains of sand, build mountains; like drops of water, make up the oceans.

They go forth into blind darkness, who worship that which is not the Life; but into darkness deeper than that, as it were, they who find delight in the Life.

There is one thing, they have said, through the Life; there is another thing, they have said, through that which is not the Life.

Thus have we heard from the wise, who taught us the spiritual teaching.

He who knows both, the Life and destruction, through destruction fording through death, through the Life reaches the Immortal.

There is a slight shading in the form, but not, it seems, in the meaning, of the word here translated the Life. It is a difficult word to render, meaning origin, power, production, birth, existence. Here, it seems to cover two meanings: the second birth, the spiritual birth from above, and that divine Life, the Logos, through which, and through obedience to which, the spiritual rebirth comes about.

And there seems to be a double meaning also in the word here rendered destruction. Through their following of the personality, which is the principle of destruction, since it is by its nature doomed to death, the multitude must enter the river of death, bondage to Karma and recurring birth. But there is the other and deeper meaning—for it must not be forgotten that we are dealing with a book of the Mysteries: Through the destruction, the dissolving of the personality, we cross death as those who ford a river; then, through the power of the Life, the Logos, bringing about the second birth, we reach the Immortal, in that "occult" world which, for the many, is hidden in darkness even deeper, more impenetrable, than the darkness of death.

(To be continued) C. J.

DANTE SKETCHES

DANTE is a great reservoir for the student of the spiritual life. No purely exoteric Western writer, be he poet or philosopher, has left so rich a treasure. The lessons he teaches the soul are as fundamentally and eternally true as any that have ever been taught. He took up the current scholastic philosophy of Thomas Aquinas, and, following the pattern of his great master, he fulfilled it. He did not destroy. He set himself to illumine one of the most rigid intellectual moulds ever created, with rays direct from the clear light of eternal truth.

Dante succeeded because he was a poet. He was poet first,—then philosopher. He is too often represented by commentators as a philosopher who was also poet. This is to miss the very heart and marrow of the man. Philosophy is a thing of the mind,—man-made,—limited. Poetry is of the spirit,—God-made,—a mystery. Dante was a mystic. He was so great and sane and balanced a mystic that he could speak to men's condition. The *intelligenti* of his day were scholastics. They were the efflorescence of the first thousand years of Christianity. It is not true to say that their works were dead. They were not. But the life within them lay deep buried behind forms and laws and words, even as the aspiration of Judea had lain encased in Levitic legalism. Dante brought this light within to the surface, using their words, but correlating, synthesizing, and illumining.

Dante, quite possibly brought up at first under Franciscan influence, wrote, as a young man, an allegoric love-poem—the *Vita Nuova,* or *New Life.* The riddle of this little book lies in the title. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The new life is the life of love. Love awakened by a woman, yes, but love also of the Eternal Feminine,—Divine Wisdom. Dante saw Beatrice, and he loved. Who will sāy where love, once roused, will not lead?

Love led Dante into exile in Paris, where he left the more allegoric and devotional atmosphere of the Franciscans for the clear, hard, precise intellect of the Dominicans. He became an accomplished scholastic. During the inevitable period of transition, he wrote the *Convito* or *Banquet,* philosophic in substance, with a vague background, or basis, of poetry and allegory. He abandoned it before the first third was completed, realizing probably that the scholastic method *per se* would never accomplish his result. Love could not be satisfied by intellectual pursuits alone, however fascinating. Love led Dante through scholasticism, and beyond.

Last, he wrote the *Divine Comedy*,—as he tells us, at the behest of love. In that drama his soul is led through the three worlds, and at the end beholds God. Love leads him home. His triple vision of Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise is but an allegory of the nature of vice and virtue; of the duties of man towards God, his neighbour, and his own soul; of the life of free-will, and how it may be used for good or for evil in working out the purposes of soul. Like the parables of old, it is to be read for its significance. Dante himself tells us, in a letter written to his patron, that this was the approach to the poem he intended; so it would seem especially a waste of time to study it in any other light, if we wish to approximate the subtiler phases of the poet's thought.

The *Divine Comedy* is not, however, all allegory, nor even all philosophy, in the sense that there is no direct treatment of the multitude of moral and spiritual problems that Dante, through his characters, is perpetually presenting. Despite the entirely unnatural and fanciful environment in which he has placed the men and women of his drama, despite situations that symbolically intensify the particular qualities of the individuals involved—be they bad or good—Dante is invariably depicting human nature, he is discussing the vital issues that confront mankind in their every-day existence, as well as those higher metaphysical and religious problems that have baffled the thought of ages. Those who are familiar with his method of revealing the very heart of a subject by some penetrating phrase or flash of symbolic picture, have reconstructed from his works what amounts to a distinct and individual philosophy of life. "The whole work was undertaken, not for a speculative but for a practical end." And again: "The purpose of the whole [the *Comedy*] and of this portion [the *Paradiso*] is to remove those who are living in this life from the state of wretchedness, and to lead them to the state of blessedness" (*Epistle to Can Grande*, 273-275 and 267-270, see 16 and 15).

Perhaps no better illustration of Dante's practical vitality as a spiritual guide could be chosen, than by analysing the first experience in the *Inferno* proper. Dante realizes that the only thoroughly and consistently impracticable people are those who do nothing. In the moral world, or speaking on the plane of soul-consciousness, a man who does nothing is neutral. And the first people Dante meets in his descent, are the neutrals.

It is typical of Dante that he is the only great poet or writer of the classical age who has seized upon the significance of neutrality as a moral disease, and realized its fundamental importance. In his view, the very first people to deal with in the course of evolution from lowest to highest, are the neutrals. Neither Homer, Virgil, Shakespeare, nor any other great poet has dealt with neutrality, or has even given evidence of recognizing it as an attitude possible to human beings. Homer and Virgil barely suggest the idea at all. They were primarily prophets of

war and of the heroic, and their thought was naturally directed towards martial vigour, manly endurance, and robust courage. To them a trimmer would be simply a coward, a craven-hearted dastard, not even fit society for right-minded women. In Homer the very gods, whose impartial attitude towards Troy might suggest that neutrality could exist on some plane above that of worldly conflict, cannot with dignity or peace of mind maintain so phlegmatic a stand. Before the final blow is struck, they obtain Jove's consent, and, entering the war on the side of their choice, they commit themselves to decisive action quite as explicitly as any of the mortal combatants. Whatever sidelight such an attitude may be thought to throw on the general question of neutrality, Homer has nowhere drawn any clear distinction;—though by way of an aside, we might be justified in inferring that, in his conception, the very gods were at least not "too proud to fight."

Virgil in like manner, since his stage is filled largely with heroes and heroines, finds no place for neutrals; and all his characters, even if sometimes by the pressure of circumstance, become involved of their own volition in the drama of action he depicts.

Shakespeare, for a different reason, is not subtile enough to see the distinction between the effects of neutrality, and the effects of other moral failures. He is dealing with the passions of mankind; nowhere does he consider that most studiously passionless of creatures, the neutral. Even Hamlet, whose over-subtilizing mind drives him from doubt to doubt, and from indecision to temporizing, has too much of the very tissue of the real hero in him to do other than hurl himself into the fray when the call comes. At such a crisis the genuine neutral, we feel, would have again controlled himself, and perhaps argued; he would have let time itself dissolve for him the balance of conflicting issues. In the main, Shakespeare also, as with the earlier poets, depicts those who hesitate or hang back as simply cowards and poltroons.

Contrast this general attitude with the precise and unenigmatic vision of neutrality, its causes and effects, which Dante gives us by his description of the neutrals in the *Inferno*. Led by Virgil, he enters the portals leading below; but before crossing the river Acheron, boundary of hell proper, he has to traverse a *buia campagna,* a dark plain or dreary waste.

> Here sighs, plaints, and deep wailings, resounded through the starless air; it made me weep at first.
>
> Strange tongues, horrible outcries, words of pain, tones of anger, voices deep and hoarse, and sounds of hands amongst them,
>
> Made a tumult, which turns itself unceasing in that air forever dyed, as sand when it eddies in a whirlwind.
>
> And I, my head begirt with horror, said: "Master, what is this that I hear? and who are these that seem so overcome with pain?"
>
> And he to me: "This miserable mode the dreary souls of those sustain, who lived without blame, and without praise.

"They are mixed with that caitiff choir of the angels, who were not rebellious, nor were faithful to God; but were for themselves.

"Heaven chased them forth to keep its beauty from impair; and deep Hell receives them not, for the wicked would have some glory over them."

And I: "Master what is so grievous to them, that makes them lament thus bitterly?" He answered: "I will tell it to thee very briefly.

"These have no hope of death, and their blind life is so mean, that they are envious of every other lot.

"Report of them the world permits not to exist; Mercy and justice disdain them; let us not speak of them; but look and pass."

And I, who looked, saw an ensign, which whirling ran so quickly that it seemed to scorn all pause;

And behind it came so long a train of people, that I should never have believed death had undone so many.

After I had recognized some amongst them, I saw and knew the shade of him who from cowardice had made the great refusal.

Forthwith I understood and felt assured that this was the crew of caitiffs, hateful to God and to his enemies,

These unfortunate, who never were alive, were naked, and sorely goaded by hornets and by wasps that were there.

These made their faces stream with blood, which mixed with tears was gathered at their feet by loathsome worms.

Inferno: Canto iii, 22-69.

This is Dante's first sight of the dead spirits and of their torments. He has not, however, as the rest of the Canto makes clear, reached Hell proper as yet. Not until Charon has ferried them across the river Acheron, which bounded this region on the far side, does the real descent into the pit commence. So this dark plain is a sort of ante-hell or vestibule, as it has been called, whereon roam people bereft of life on earth, and yet not included amongst the dead of the nether world.

In this passage it is quite clear that Dante is not limiting himself to a purely political neutrality, dictated by policy and expediency. We must believe that Dante would never have done this,—that he never could have conceived a political issue that did not involve a moral. In the *De Monarchia,* where the state and its principles of conduct are rigorously discussed, he tells us that "the world is ordered best when justice is most paramount therein,"—a moral qualification; and he defines further in the same paragraph: "Justice, considered in itself, and in its proper nature, is a certain rightness or rule of conduct, which rejects on either side all that deviates from it" (*De Mon.* xi). There is no place for neutrality here: a judge decides, rejects; he can neither temporize nor remain aloof.

To be sure, occasions would arise when the right course of action would follow the beatitude, "Blessed are the peace-makers." But there is nothing neutral, in Dante's sense, in such an attitude, if properly assumed and maintained, and provided there be no clear moral issue in-

volved. For either the combatants are both in the wrong, in which case the peace-maker takes the side of good against the two evils; or the *casus belli* is trivial, or reducible to "bad blood" and temper,—in which case the peace-maker again asserts the superiority of right conduct, and places himself upon whichever side has the better claim to justice and retribution. In all such cases, Dante would feel that a definite stand is taken, and that the will has not been withdrawn from its proper sphere as the author of action, to the furtherance of manifold legal hair-splittings, and to those finer heights of intellectual exercise that border on casuistry.

Dante is essentially an interpreter of human will. He believes that the will is the most fundamental part of a man, lying behind thought, emotion and sensation. He sees that just as in every action in life there must be some element of will, so, the will being involved, there must inevitably be also a choice between a better or a worse,—between good and evil. But the man who refuses to choose, is beyond all others unworthy, because he negatives his very manhood,—that in him which forms the essence and continuity of himself. Freedom of will permits men to align themselves with the unyielding sweep of evolutionary purpose, or to set their wills counter to the whole;—in which case, as its final result, there is nothing left but the fixed rebellion of hell and the death of the soul. Paradise and Purgatory describe the former, with all their degrees of harmonious co-operation, from highest to least possible; hell describes the latter, inflexibly rebellious, an eternal self-redamnation.

But, in the ante-hell, Dante describes this other body of people, who can be classified properly as having neither the harmonious nor the rebellious types of will. Since hell punishes the fruit and consequences of sin,—of evil willing—the poet was under the logical necessity of excluding the neutrals, who can hardly be said to have will-consequences at all; while their pusillanimity with equal certainty demands their exclusion from Purgatory—for there is nothing adequate to purge. So they occupy a place between two worlds, segregated, tormented, hopeless as only the weak are hopeless, while even "Report of them the world permits not to exist." But Dante does not stop with the mere placing of them in this anomalous position, propelled by driving, sand-laden winds, stung with the wasps of petty desires, and treading on the loathsome worms of selfish cowardice. He pours on them such tremendous scorn—"dreary souls—who lived without blame and without praise," "hateful to God and to his enemies," "for themselves," "mean," blind, cowardly, whom Mercy and Justice alike disdain,—that though the scale of evil in the *Inferno* is a descending one, these neutrals, rejected even by hell, are in some way abjectly lower and more to be condemned than the malicious traitors at the bottom of the pit. Nowhere does Dante say this, but the clear inference gathers force from its very theoretic impossibility.

Dante parallels exactly his symbolic divisions of the universe with the states of the human will. On the one hand there is Paradise, Purgatory, and Hell,—with a special place outside the three for the neutrals. So in man also, there is complete harmony and co-operation of his will with the divine will, which is the highest stage of beatitude; there is the will, part good and part rebellious, which can be purged and redirected wholly to the good; there is the fixed intent to evil, incorrigible, self-sufficient and self-satisfied; and there is apart from these a neutral, a man who so far refuses to will, to choose, that he becomes will-less,—in very essence a neuter.

Dante sees this as a state of soul reached logically by a certain course of action. To his penetrating estimate of human motives, there is an attitude of the will towards life that is more harmful in some ways than downright, out-and-out sinning. For a neutral has buried his talent; he has taken his most vital human force—his power of choice, and has done nothing with it; he has made a negation of it; he no longer has anything to show for it. And just as nature has many examples of organs which have become useless and atrophied from lack of exercise, so Dante sees neutrality as that state of impairment of the will which results from the repeated refusal to use it.

To choose *not to will,* though it may be said to be voluntary, yet, if continued in, logically leads to the destruction of the will. If we add to this the argument that a fundamental principle of human life is growth, and that the neutral chooses stagnation,—what can remain eventually but a mere shell of the soul, finally incapable of choosing at all;—a purely animal life, selfish, impelled by desires and emotions, but a conscious willing power no longer?

Perhaps any discussion of a mediæval writer raises the question to-day as to whether the whole plan and end of the thought is not a misconception based on false or illogical premises,—on a too-limited, unscientific outlook on life. Does modern psychology find any *rapprochement* between its discoveries and such a conception of the will?

This is no place for a technical analysis; but if science be not a kind of glorified common sense, it will not lead humanity very far. And Dante at least on this question has common sense, and the testimony of every-day experience, on his side. He distinguishes between the coward, who *acted* on his cowardice, and the cowardly neutral who "made the great refusal,"—who did the negative thing. In his psychology, neutrality is an evil in itself, just as cowardice or selfishness is evil. He insists that the deliberate refusal to take sides, or the persistent desire to avoid all responsibility and choice, means that the will, like a disused muscle, atrophies and ceases to exist. Such "unfortunates," he exclaims, "never were alive."

There are many familiar types whom Dante must have had in mind when he wrote. Such people are seen in every walk of life. They are

those who decline to face the issue of life, who pretend to keep the Commandments, and suppose themselves ripe for the kingdom of heaven. They do not deny truth, they avoid thinking about it; they do not rebel against God and his universe, they simply ignore him; they do not consciously assert themselves, they merely indulge every passing caprice. They are that predominating class who live only in the moment, and in the moment think only of themselves. The essence of their history is not so much this little sin or that little act; it is that they form no integral part of the great forward sweep of the universe; their movement is but an illusory current in a backwash of the great stream of universal purpose. And so, though giving the appearance of activity, in that inner consciousness where the soul lives, acts, and grows, they have refused the opportunities a larger life has offered their individual lives, and have emasculated and extinguished the very heart and centre of their existence.

Dante was never of these. He feels that human growth and evolution in its big sense can have no place for them; that there could be no real hesitation, no doubt, no trimming, without suffering for it in a special way. From the lessons learnt from the consequences of sin, we can rise to better things. Neutrality, however, at once sets us outside the very order of the universe, and its punishment is ostracism and a living death, "envious of every other lot." "Let us not speak, but look, and pass."

MARION HALE.

Our whole trouble in our lot in this world rises from the disagreement of our mind therewith. Let the mind be brought to the lot, and the whole tumult is instantly hushed; let it be kept in that disposition, and the man shall stand at ease, in his affliction, like a rock unmoved with waters beating upon it.—T. BOSTON.

The design of God is rather to rectify the will than to satisfy the understanding. If there were no obscurity in religion, the understanding might be benefited, but the will would be injured.—PASCAL.

SPINOZA'S "ETHICS"

II. On Human Bondage and the Way of Deliverance*

LOVE is the cause and being of pure vision, but, as a philosopher has said, love cannot be forced. Each soul must love in its own way, for love may be called the desire of the soul to realize its appointed end. If that end be union with the divine, and if the soul be now surrounded by false lights and allured by false destinies, then, the first stage of the "great work" must be the awakening in man of the *consciousness* of his true goal. When consciousness is awakened, love will lead the way.

All great philosophies have one purpose,—to bring man to that point where his character can be moved in its proper direction by that love, which is the portion of every soul. Philosophy is not the only talisman; and no philosopher, least of all a follower of Plato, can claim that metaphysical theory is an end in itself. Some men are drawn onward by action, some by art, and others by patient and quiet thought. The philosopher speaks to the man of thought, because he himself is akin to the man of thought. His purpose is not thought for its own sake, nor action for its own sake. He aims to make ready the soul of man for its re-birth as a divine and perfected spirit. One who listens can learn; for the rest there are other teachers. In the perfected man, thought and action are convertible terms, though the emphasis for every individual must differ. Plotinus said, speaking of souls united in spirit: "Everyone has all things in himself and sees all things in another, so that all things are everywhere and all is all and each is all and the glory is infinite. Each of them is great, since the small also is great. In Heaven the sun is all the stars, and again each and all are the sun. One thing in each is prominent above the rest; but it also shows forth all." [7]

Spinoza's *"Ethics"* is a professed effort to lead men to blessedness by the light of reason. In Parts I and II he conceives of God as the one, infinite, impersonal and free Substance, and of man as a mode or emanation of the divine nature, more or less free, according as he is more or less remote from the Source. In Parts III and IV he shows how man has been captivated by images evolved from the emanated nature (or matter), and how by the aid of reason he may discover somewhat of his true relation to nature—both divine and emanated, so that he can in no slight degree alleviate his sufferings and elevate his consciousness. In Part V he completes the cycle of his argument and upholds the

* See Theosophical Quarterly, April, 1919, for the first of these two papers on Spinoza's Ethics.

[7] *Enneads*, V., 8, 4.

intuition of man's essential divinity as his true good, for which the life of the philosopher offers *one* way of preparation.[8]

Among philosophers of the West, only Pythagoras seems to have placed over his language such restraint and severity of diction. To read Spinoza requires an unwavering attention and a certain pleasure in mathematical demonstration—such a pleasure as is given by Euclid, whose method of proof Spinoza, in fact, adopts. H. P. B. says that Spinoza, like Giordano Bruno, was secretly a Pythagorean. "The cautious reserve which he places upon himself in his writings makes it extremely difficult for one who does not read him between the lines, and is not thoroughly acquainted with the hidden meaning of the Pythagorean metaphysics, to ascertain what his real sentiments were." [9]

With due modesty, then, let us approach Spinoza's preliminary reflections on the emotions. "Such emotions as hate, wrath, envy, etc., considered in themselves, follow from the same necessity and ability of nature as other things: therefore they acknowledge certain causes, through which they are understood, and have certain properties equally worthy of our knowledge as the properties of any other thing, the contemplation of which alone delights us. So I shall treat of the nature and force of the emotions and the power of the mind over them—and I shall regard human actions and desires, exactly as if I were dealing with lines, planes and solids." [10]

Proceeding step by step, Spinoza concludes that "emotion" is a term denoting all those forces of mind or body, which determine a man's "place in nature" at any given moment. According as that place tends to be higher or lower in the scale of being, we may call the emotion good or evil, spiritual or psychic. Man either controls his emotions, when they increase his power or virtue, or is controlled by them, when his power or virtue is diminished. In the former case, by an emotion we understand an *action,* if otherwise a *passion.*[11]

How are we to know whether an emotion is good or evil, active or passive? Spinoza's answer is unequivocal and in the spirit of the old Greek ethics. "The mind can suffer great changes and can pass now to a state of greater or lesser perfection. I shall understand by pleasure the emotion by which the mind passes to a higher state of perfection, and by pain the emotion by which it passes to a lower state of perfection." [12] Whatsoever gives pleasure is good, whatsoever gives pain is evil. It will be seen later that this statement must be considerably qualified but the meaning is clear enough. The human soul moves up and

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[8] Cf. *Ethics,* V., 41.

[9] *Isis Unveiled.* I., 94.

[10] *Ethics,* III. Introd. The Pythagoreans regarded geometric design as the form of nature or the model from which individual things derive meaning. An emotion is a thing, to be studied like a triangle.

[11] III. def. 2, 3, 4.

[12] III., 11, note.

down the ray of life, and harmony or discord reflects in its inner life the direction of the process. Let it be remembered that all such terms—good and evil, pleasure and pain—are applicable only to individuals in a state of change and relative separation from the One Being. "The mind is only liable to emotions which are referred to passions while the body lasts." [13] God, whose nature is absolutely free, "is free from passions, nor is he affected with any emotion of pleasure or pain." [14] When one has reached the world of the Eternal, where time and change are not, there can be no better or worse, for in the words of Plotinus, "the small also is great." In that world, as Heraclitus said, "the way up and the way down are one and the same."

"Human lack of power in moderating the emotions I call servitude. A man who is submissive to his emotions, is not in power over himself, but in the hands of fortune to such an extent, that he is often constrained,—although he may see what is better for him—to follow what is worse." [15] The secret of that lack of power is misdirected desire. Like all who have reflected deeply on human sufferings, Spinoza finds the explanation of all unhappiness in the vain desires of men, and finds the ultimate possible salvation of the race in the discipline of desire. "The force and increase of (undisciplined) desires are not defined by human power, but by power which is outside us, and they indicate our want of power and our mutilated knowledge." [16]

"Everything, in so far as it is in itself, endeavours to persist in its own being," [17] and that endeavour comprises what we call desire. Love is pleasure in the expression of one's being and is directed towards that which is held to be the cause of the pleasure.[18] But there is a true being of an entity and a false being, a spiritual, and a psychic man; and each of these has an existence in accordance with its nature. The true being is that which is the essence of an entity, that which expresses the perfected destiny of that entity "under the form of eternity." It is unassailable, eternal, free, being one with divine nature. The false being, the emanation of the true, has re-absorption into this true being for its proper end; but it has involved itself in other purposes proper to other beings, for its power is limited and far surpassed by that of external causes.[19] "There is no individual thing in nature than which there is none more powerful or stronger." [20] The true being—the Watcher—is not recognized as the appointed object of love for the emanated soul, which on the contrary desires that which should properly be desired by another. In the world of Maya all souls are magnetized and determined

[13] V., 34.
[14] V., 17.
[15] IV., Introd.
[16] IV., Appendix 2.
[17] III., 6, 7.
[18] III., 9, n. 13, n.
[19] IV., 3, 4.
[20] IV., axiom.

to action one by another, just as in the physical world all motion appears as mechanical and as if caused by the impact of one part of a machine on another part.[21]

Thus, the pleasures of psychic life must be surmounted, before the spirit of man can express adequately the divine nature, which is present in all creatures from the highest to the lowest.[22] For these pleasures spring from the desires of the lower self and are dependent upon stimuli beyond one's control. After they have awakened the consciousness from tamasic sleep, they can remain only as hindrances; and, if the soul persists in them, they must end by separating it forever from its spiritual essence.

Spinoza is very clear on this point. Pleasure is never in itself evil, but always good, for it is an emotion whereby the body's[23] power of action is increased, and according as the body is capable of action, the mind must participate in Eternity.[24] The more the body is rendered apt for acting, the more the mind is rendered apt for perceiving.[25] Pain in itself is evil, for it is an emotion whereby the body's power of action is diminished. "There cannot be too much merriment, but it is always good; but, on the other hand, melancholy is always bad." [26]

But he adds: "Merriment which we said to be good, can be more easily conceived than observed. For the emotions by which we are daily assailed have reference to *some part of the body which is affected beyond the others,* and so the emotions as a rule are in excess and detain the mind in the contemplation of one object, so that it cannot think of others." [27] This discordant pleasure which he calls titillation, can be excessive and bad; and grief may be good in the measure that titillation is bad, since grief, which also has reference only to one part of the body, may check over-stimulation of that same part, and cause it to function in more normal relation to the other parts.[28]

Psychic pleasure affects the total being of man discordantly, and psychic pain may restore the harmony by inhibiting the activity, which is producing the discord.

Love and desire, the great agents of spiritual movement, are the great agents of psychic movement, when they are not directed by the true being of man.[29] For then they represent merely the force in a man, which directs him to follow any given direction and which comes not from his divine nature but from the "elementals" of the emanated world.

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[21] II., 9.
[22] Cf. I., conclusion of Appendix.
[23] For Spinoza the body is "the object of the idea constituting the human mind," II., 11, 12.
[24] V., 39.
[25] II., 14; IV., 38, 41, 60.
[26] IV., 42.
[27] IV., 44, n.
[28] IV., 43. III., 11, n.
[29] IV., 44.

When love and desire are psychic, they are dependent on images for fuel. The images are vampirized by the psychic man, until the limits of his possible pleasure are reached. Then the images, still remaining present to the consciousness, take their revenge on the psychic man and vampirize him in turn. Pleasure passes into its opposite, pain. Esau has sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. "While we are enjoying the thing that we desired, the body from the enjoyment acquires a new disposition, by which it is determined in another way, and other images of things are aroused in it and the mind begins to imagine and desire other things. *E. g.*, when we imagine some food, we desire to enjoy it, that is, to eat it. But as soon as we enjoy it, the body's desire is turned in another direction. If then, the image of this same food be again stimulated, and consequently the desire of eating it be stimulated, the new condition of the body will feel disgust at this desire or endeavour, and consequently the presence of the food which before we desired will now be odious to us." [30]

It is necessary to discipline love and desire, so that they may be directed towards those objects proper to a human soul. When the desire is in accordance with the real nature of man, then, his pleasure becoming spiritual will denote a returning movement, a transition of the emanated soul toward higher levels of being. Such pleasure or happiness, as it might better be called, will avoid satiety, in so far as it is stimulated by the living contemplation of the divine nature, for it is the essence of that nature to draw individual things out of duration and to give to them its own consciousness of an eternal blessedness. "The intellectual love of God which arises from intuition is eternal." "No love save intellectual love is eternal." "The mind is only liable to emotions which are referred to passions, while the body lasts." "There is nothing in nature which is contrary to intellectual love or which can remove it." [31]

"Whose heart is untroubled in sorrows," says the *Bhagavad Gita*, "who in pleasures is unallured, from whom lust and fear and wrath are gone, that silent one is declared to be firm in soul." [32]

How can one train the desires to obey the spirit? How can one induce in character the equilibrium of the faculties? How can one learn to follow the Middle Way, the way of all the sages since the world began? To answer these questions is to solve the riddle of life itself.

Let it be emphasized that the answer of Spinoza, the philosopher, is one answer only, adapted to the souls relatively richest in intellect. Like the Sankhyas of India he may be said, "to put perception first, to make insight precede the will; to liberate thought first, and then, through liberated thought, to free himself from bondage in act." [33] Here is the

[30] III., 59, note.
[31] V., 33, 34, corollary; 37.
[32] Transl. by Charles Johnston, Bk. II.
[33] *Ibid.*, Introd. to Bk. V.

secret of his glorification of reason. "The desire of knowing things by intuition cannot arise from mutilated and confused ideas, but only from reason." [34] "The ultimate aim of a man who is guided by reason, that is, his greatest desire, by which he endeavours to moderate all the others, is that whereby an adequate conception is brought to him of all things which can come within the scope of his intelligence." [35] This conception is most certainly not a merely objective science, but a dynamic contemplation, which is one and the same with spiritual life. Therefore, "blessedness is nothing else than satisfaction of mind which arises from the intuitive knowledge of God." [36] "Desire which arises from reason can have no excess," [37] and is always good.

Let man learn what is his true nature, argues the philosopher, and what is the cause of the obstructions barring him from expression of that true nature. Let him see that undisciplined desire alone debars him from realizing the blessedness of union in God. Let him understand how, even here upon the earth, it is possible by devotion to reason, to discern between that which brings enduring pleasure and that which brings pain, and so to turn the soul towards God,—even though, at first, one's motives be personal and positivistic.

One is reminded of William James' designation of the "tough-minded." But Spinoza insists on the need of finally transcending all self-seeking utilitarianism, if one would attain to real beatitude and wisdom. Happiness is the natural end of man, for "the mind endeavours to imagine those things only which impose upon it the power of action," [38] and the power of action signifies happiness. But happiness must not be sought for its own sake. In his most sublime intuition, Spinoza says: "He who truly loves God cannot desire that God should love him in return." [39] "Blessedness is not the reward of virtue, but virtue itself; nor should we rejoice therein, for that we restrain our lusts, but because we rejoice therein, we can restrain our lusts." [40]

"The soul must be unfettered, the desires free," it is said in *Light on the Path,* "but until they are fixed only on that state wherein there is neither reward nor punishment, good nor evil, it is in vain that he endeavours. Learn now that there is no cure for desire, no cure for the love of reward, no cure for the misery of longing, save in the fixing of the sight and hearing upon that which is invisible and soundless." [41] From all the testimony of the mystics on this absolute need of disinterestedness, of freely offered love, we can select at random the words

[34] V., 28.
[35] IV., Appendix 4.
[36] *Ibid.*
[37] IV., 61. IV., Appendix 3.
[38] III., 54.
[39] V., 19.
[40] V., 42.
[41] p. 91.

of two very different seers of the West. "O Love," said St. Catherine of Genoa, "I do not wish to follow thee for the sake of these delights, but solely from the motive of true love." [42] And Jakob Boehme: "I have not sought this knowledge, nor so much as to know anything concerning it. I sought only for the heart of God, therein to hide myself." [43] Disinterested devotion is the great theme of the *Bhagavad Gita,* which reconciled the conflicting Indian systems. "Who does the work that is to be done without seeking reward, he has renounced, he follows union." [44]

When one possesses this talisman of unqualified devotion, then only can the gods entrust him with any mission upon the earth, for his firmness cannot be shaken. "Every man exists by consummate right of nature, so that every man does by reason of this right those things which follow from the necessity of his nature; and therefore every man judges for himself, by his consummate right of nature, what is good or bad, and consults his advantage according to his disposition and revenges himself and endeavours to preserve what he loves and to destroy what he hates. *If men lived according to the dictate of reason, each one would possess his right without any danger;* but because they are liable to emotions which far surpass human power or virtue, they are therefore drawn in different directions and are contrary one to the other. It is necessary, in order that men may live in concord, that they should give up their natural right and render themselves reciprocally secure, and determine to do nothing that will be injurious to another. No emotion can be checked save by another stronger emotion, so that everyone refrains from inflicting evil through fear of incurring a greater evil." [45] Thus, states are formed by a sort of "social contract" reminding one of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau.

But Spinoza offers no sentimental democratic panacea to enable all men to remain selfish with impunity. The only man who can live well in any state, is he who has liberated his desire from the magnetism of images. Until all men are free, by definition, no free state is possible. It is right that men should seek their interests; but he, who seeks his real interests, will seek equally the real interests of all mankind. "Nothing can be desired by men more excellent for their self-preservation than that all with all should so agree that they compose the minds of all into one mind, and all endeavour at the same time as much as possible to preserve their being, and all seek at the same time what is useful to them all as a body. From which it follows that men who, under the guidance of reason, seek what is useful to them, desire nothing for themselves, which they do not also desire for the rest of mankind, and there-

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[42] *Vita,* p. 8.
[43] *Aurora* Eng. transl. 1764, p. 237.
[44] *Bhagavad Gita,* opus cit., Bk. VI.
[45] IV., 37, note 2. Italics ours.

fore they are just, faithful and honourable." [46] "He who lives under the guidance of reason endeavours as much as possible to repay his fellow's hatred with love and nobleness." "He who wishes to revenge injuries by reciprocal hatred will live in misery. But he who endeavours to drive away hatred by means of love, fights with pleasure and confidence; he resists equally one or many men, and scarcely needs at all the help of fortune. Those whom he conquers yield joyfully, not from want of force but increase thereof." [47] "It is above all things useful to men that they unite their habits of life and bind themselves together with such bonds as can most easily make one individual of them all, and that should be done which serves the purpose of confirming friendship." [48]

The wise man finds "a firm seat for himself, neither too high nor too low." [49] His way is the Middle Way. His faculties are tempered and balanced, so that by no possibility can one faculty arrogate to itself the forces which belong to another. He will neither hope nor fear, for he lives on a plane of fruition and is superior to fortune.[50] He is neither proud nor humble, but possesses a certain "self-complacency" arising from the knowledge of his true self.[51] He is ever ready to aid others, for indeed he cannot act for himself without acting also for others, but no circumstance in nature can induce in him a state of spiritual sorrow, for "in so far as we understand the causes of pain, it ceases to be a passion, that is, thus far it ceases to be pain; and therefore in so far as we understand God to be the cause of pain we rejoice." [52]

Thus, he who lives under the guidance of reason, cannot be affected by those emotions which sentimentalists glorify as pity and remorse. "Pity is sadness and therefore bad in itself. The good which follows from it, that we endeavour to free the man whom we pity from his misery, we desire to do from the mere command of reason, nor can we do anything which we know to be good save under the guidance of reason. Therefore pity is bad and useless in itself. He who rightly knows that all things follow from the necessity of divine nature, and come to pass according to the eternal natural and regular laws, will find nothing worthy of hatred or contempt. . . . I am speaking expressly of him who lives under the guidance of reason. He who is moved neither by reason nor pity to help others is rightly called inhuman." [53] Pity leads one often to do something of which he afterwards repents, for we can do nothing according to emotion which we certainly know to be good, and we are easily deceived by false opinions. Like all grief, it is jus-

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[46] IV., 18, note.
[47] IV., 46 and note.
[48] Cf. IV., Appendix 12.
[49] Cf. *Bhagavad Gita*, op. cit., Bk. VI.
[50] IV., 47.
[51] IV., 52, 53, 55.
[52] V., 18, Cf. III., 59; V., 3.
[53] IV., 50 and note.

tifiable only as the lesser of two evils, for it is better to be pitiful than cruel. Spinoza makes the distinction between that pity, which is so often self-pity, and compassion, which is the natural attitude of the spiritually strong towards the weak. For compassion is essentially not an emotion, but "an abstract, impersonal law, whose nature, being absolute Harmony, is thrown into confusion by discord, suffering and sin." [54]

He who has attained to such equilibrium of the emotions, is ready, according to Spinoza, to receive consciousness of that state above all emotions, above all reasoning, where there is neither growth nor decay, where all Truth is present to the seer in an eternal, undivided contemplation. The finite faculties will be absorbed into the infinite. The soul will have returned to the One that gave it birth and in the beginning sent it forth to gain consciousness, character and wisdom. The psychic man will die, to re-become a Son of God.

Between the man who has started on the path and the man who has reached his appointed end, there is all the difference between one who still desires happiness for himself and one who has died to all desire, keeping only the essence thereof, the love of God and compassion for men. In curing men of the sense of separateness, intellect is always helpful and, for some souls, is the great key which alone can unlock the spiritual will. It is to these souls that Spinoza, and those of his kind, speak.

His concluding words are characteristic. "The wise man is scarcely moved in spirit: he is conscious of himself, of God, and of things by a certain eternal necessity, he never ceases to be, and always enjoys satisfaction of mind. If the road I have shown to lead to this is very difficult, it can yet be discovered. And clearly it must be very hard, when it is so seldom found. For how could it be that it is neglected practically by all, if salvation were close at hand and could be found without difficulty? But all excellent things are as difficult as they are rare." [55]

STANLEY V. LADOW.

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[54] *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 74, note 1.
[55] V., 42, note.

PIE-HANKERING AND HEREDITIES

MR. GRISCOM, that wise, patient, and loving guide of so many students of Theosophy, once said that, as we are in a universe, it must be that we may study the workings of the laws of the universe in the most trivial happenings, if we will but take the trouble to look.

I had been reading several of Mr. Griscom's *Elementary Articles.* His fearless exposure of what lies within the sins we treat so complacently, lingered in the forefront of my mind as I went to dinner. We had Dutch apple pie. It tasted deliciously. I was about to ask my mother for another helping. My desire therefor suddenly collided with Mr. Griscom's teachings. I found myself asking of myself: "Now why do you want that second piece of pie?" I did not ask for it. Instead, I began analyzing my desire. I did not need more food. What was it I wanted? I liked the taste of the pie. I hankered for taste, not for sustenance. I was breaking the first unnumbered rule of *Light on the Path,* as elucidated in the Comment thereon. In short, I wanted a sensation. It happened to be a sensation of taste, but that did not excuse me.

Essentially there was no moral distinction between my desire and that of a man at a Rescue Mission, hankering for the taste of "forty-rod." Vile as that stuff is, harmful as it is, yet, to acclimated taste, it is desirable. Why? Because it can produce a sensation in even the most brazen palate. I have been trying for years to follow a limited diet. I know it is better for me. Indeed it is essential for my health. Nevertheless, I was about to imperil my physical well-being by the gratification of a desire for the taste of something. The worst of it was, I knew better. Only (once more) the influence of Mr. Griscom had checked me. It seemed a trivial happening—a mere question of a second helping of pie—yet here I was face to face, as it would seem, with a working of universal law. Why should a T.S. member and "down-and-outers" be subject to one and the same temptation? Tempted to such a futile proceeding, to such a silly act, in either case.

Had I eaten that piece of pie it might, or it might not, have given me indigestion. If it had, I would not have been more restless than I was over it uneaten. Questioning could not be silenced. Why did I want that second piece? It was not enough to say "for the taste." Why did I seek the sense-enjoyment of taste—a most elementary sensation? My Irish terrier revels in the joy of tasting. It seemed strange that I should be so near the plane of a terrier puppy.

A thought came to me; in its inception it brought a bit of comfort. I had an inherited taste for good things to eat. Were not So-and-so, and So-and-so, among my ancestors, famed gourmets? Was not my own father once described as one of the few men of his day who really knew what was fit to eat? Therefore, after all, I am not responsible for a tendency to like things that taste pleasingly when I have an inheritedly acute palate. But that ghost of a second piece of pie, that I had refused to eat, persisted in haunting me. Is a man not responsible for his inherited characteristics? If he be not, what happens to the freedom of will to choose between good and evil? a doctrine, by the way, held by all students in the field of the soul, whether the line of study be theosophical or dogmatically theological.

This started my mind off on the whole question of heredity. What do we inherit? Or rather what do we not inherit? And why do we inherit what we do? And where do we get our inheritance from? Under Mendel's law, so universally accepted by science, there is a mathematical probability that some of us exactly reproduce physically our "great-great-many-times-great-grandfathers." Yet we know that we are not the same individuality that animated two similar personalities—using "similar" with the exactness of an Euclidian. Theologian, settlement-worker, and theosophical student are, for once, in entire agreement, in believing that it is a duty to fight against an inherited tendency that is evil; such as a taste for alcohol—or for an unnecessary second piece of pie. "I wish I had never seen a piece of pie," I thought, with a distinct sense of irritation. What an injustice that a perfectly well-meaning person, like my worthy self, should have to fight against a tendency that is detrimental. Over-eating is a real danger to me, even if only considered on the plane of the body. Indeed it is a menace to all of our bodies, as the Medico-Acturial studies have proved. Has it not been shown, beyond gainsay, that unwise over-feeding kills more men than invading disease germs?

What kind of justice is there in a universe that permits a desire for food that is not needed, in bodies that cannot stand over-eating? Some students of the subject say that Americans over-eat, as a nation, because we are so nearly descended from pioneers, out-of-doors men and hard physical workers; that we have inherited our appetities from immediate ancestors whose life enabled them to assimilate, with safety, larger quantities of food than we can. Heredity again! Here were two distinct lines of heredity, not mutually exclusive by any means: the one a matter of taste; the other a matter of the physical organism. According to this I get my desire for things that taste well from my gourmet ancestors; the eagerness to consume large quantities of food from those who were athletic or hard-working. But why not, then, a body that can stand the poisoning of over-eating? Who is responsible for my body, any way? "Heredity" is one explanation. True, it may be modified by environment, but perhaps that is purely accidental. What is it in me

that objects to sinking under the pressure of those two inherited traits; to over-eat and to over-enjoy what I eat?

If we say "heredity" again (and I may "point with pride" to God-fearing, self-sacrificing religious men and women in my ancestry), we come up against a third line of heredity—and what shall we call it? We have had the desire of the body; the desire for sensation; what is this new inheritance? Because both the others lead to harmful results, which this new element recognizes as such, would it do to call this the reason-desire? Is that all that my desire for that second piece of pie suggests? How about the primary desire for food to sustain life—that manifestation of the law of self-preservation? It is one of the very first desires of the young of all species, all but coincident with the impulses to breathe and to sleep. It is so universal that it seems almost non-individual, yet you and I have it or else we die. How would it do to call this Number Four inheritance "the desire to live," as a manifestation of mere living—no more? But where does this "picturing" faculty come in; this ability to "see" myself tasting that second piece of pie that I did not take (and still hanker for, perhaps)?

At this point, in my refusal to assimilate, and thus get rid of that annoying piece of pie that I had not eaten, I had reached my room. I got up and went over to the bookcase, where four large, solemn-looking blue volumes held the right of the line. I took down one of them—the thinnest, marked, on its narrow back, in brave gilt lettering *"Secret Doctrine—Blavatsky—Index."* By its aid I turned to page 631 of the second volume (Edition of 1893) of that truly marvelous compendium of human knowledge, with its "queer" diagram of a square below a triangle, the latter pointing to "Noah in a New Dress," a page title that illustrates an apparent use of the startling to frighten away the thoughtless—a method one is inclined to believe that that great Messenger used with deliberation, and, one suspects, with a certain amused relish.

Do we not find that that piece of uneaten, but possibly still desired pie, suggested lines of heredity in rather close parallel to the classification appended to the left of the diagram? Starting at the bottom we have: "7. Body (Sthula Sharira)." We found a body inheritance in the automatic habit of over-eating. Then: "6. Life Essence (Prana)," which corresponds with the primary desire to eat, as a life preservative, dating almost to our first breath, and as universal as we have been taught that Prana is. Next comes: "5. Astral Body (Linga Sharira),"—is that not where the "picturing" faculty lies; inherited, the rationalists teach us, from the earliest days of our race? Above this: "4. Animal Soul (Kama Rupa)." Did we not note that I share with my dog the desire to taste?

This completes the notations to the Square. The four inherited reactions to pie, so far compared, are shared by man and dog alike. Our next step was what we agreed to call a reason-desire. We do not expect

to find it in the dog. My terrier may resist taking food off my table. That is not from reasoning. His desire to avoid pain explains his respect for my table. He associates an inevitable whipping with taking food from the table. He does not consider the act wrong; rather it is too dangerous—the desire to live, one might say, operating from another angle. Did I not also "inherit" a knowledge that to have eaten that second piece of pie would have been wrong? How did Madame Blavatsky continue her classification: "3. Human Soul, Mind (Manas)." So, I have inherited a soul. But did she stop there? No: "2. Spiritual Soul (Buddhi)." Above this we slide off the point of the triangle into the infinite: "1. Universal Soul (Atma)." The foolish desire for forbidden pie, all wiseacres to the contrary notwithstanding, is not "universal." So, perhaps, we may reverently turn from Atma, as it suggests the presence of the infinite and ultimate.

But what about that sixth line of inheritance, if we are to carry on our parallel? Have I not demonstrated that the influence of Mr. Griscom enabled me to resist taking that second piece of pie? Was that not a functioning in the spiritual on my part?

This immediately suggests that my mind was not single. I knew I did not need that extra dainty. I had considered taking it, but the thought of Mr. Griscom had made me do right. Apparently, then, Manas is not single but dual—one part being pulled up by the spiritual, the other dragged down by the animal. Then the battle ground is in Manas—the mind. But as we read the *Secret Doctrine* we shall find that "mind" was used, by Madame Blavatsky, with a very different meaning from that contained in our customary limitation to mere brain-functioning. We are not dealing with the brain. I doubt if my brain knows that pie exists! It is something that uses the brain that hankered for pie, after hunger was satiated.

As the pie continued to trouble me, I began to wonder with Kim "Who is Kim?" According to the pie, for to it must be given credit for this study, I am of six lines of heredity, to say nothing of the universal. Have I no individuality? Am I a mere congery of heredities? What nonsense! "I know that I am." And I know, know as I know nothing else, that I have the godlike knowledge of both good and evil, the God-given power to choose between them. If this be true, and I know it is, how can I be the mere sport of contesting heredities? Must it not be that I have so chosen? Must it not be that I picked out a combination of heredities for some purpose? But has Madame Blavatsky shown only seven "Human Aspects or Principles"? Is that the only stratification? Can there not be a cutting through on another line? Is this physical world the only world? We all know better. No being, endowed with any power of fancy, stops here. Call it "the Happy Hunting Ground" or "Heaven" or the "Spiritual World"; "the Place of the Bad Spirits" or "Hell" or "the Psychic World". We all recognize at least two other stages

or planes of existence besides this. Even the most rationalistic person will concede that there is a state after death when we shall be (1) as well off as we are; (2) better off than we are; or (3) worse off than we are—so here, again, we find the three. Indeed, does this not suggest a fourth—call it consummated union or complete annihilation, as you please. Do not let us quarrel over words; we mean the same thing. One of us looks down and sees—"Nothing"; the other, looking up—"Everything". We really agree. The only difference is in our individual reaction. But I started, a while ago, with the premise that even that all-pervading piece of pie (that may still be in the pantry, "for aught I know," as my small son says) has nothing to do with the universal. Let us keep to Dante's "Hell, Purgatory and Heaven." "But," my giddy mind suggested, "you are to keep to three stages or planes, yet you make it four—you forget the Earth."

The personified pie—for by this time it had all but become a Person, if not, indeed, a Personage—at this point reached out a hand; this is not mixed metaphor, so remarkable a piece of pie must be conceded at least hands; look at the way it had taken hold of me! It reached out a hand, and led me to the Trail Theosophical, out of my flounderings in the Swamp of Surmise. Three stages or planes, or four stages or planes (to omit that universal where we found Atma) which shall we accept? Under the single-life plan of our modern western religions, we are forced to consider that there are four stages—our earth, and Dante's three. We know that there are times when we deserve hell; times when we have earned "another chance"; we know those who merit heaven. So, if there be but a single-life on this earth, three more stages are needed. But what about that questioning of eternal justice, which the study of heredity so quickly brought to the front? If there be but a single life, what hideous injustice rules. We know that this is not true—however blind justice may seem, we know that there is justice in the world. Even the mechanistic philosopher recognizes love—if it be only a cell-reflex in the first cell; hence love must be in the universe. How can justice and love and heredity travel together?

I have told how the pie reminded me that I had the God-given choice between good and evil. Then my lot here to-day, heredities and all, is by my own choice. Then it must be that I am, by choice, trying to do something, to be something? I know that I want to be different from what I am. Saints and socialists alike want to better themselves—a desire in common, though with widely different goals; different "intentions". Is this merely a blind rising of the race; an even blinder reflex of the multiple-cell? I know I know, "that I am I". I want to be something better. Have I always been as I am? Why did I choose my heredities? There must have been a starting place. Why put it off into space? Why not recognize that law of conservation that rules nature, that law that permits no waste. The futile maple seedlings serve to enrich the humus;

thus do they contribute to growth. Follow the fate of any one of those flying seeds. Irrespective of its individual fate, it inevitably returns, though it be only as impalpable dust, ultimately to enrich growth, to feed life. Under that law of conservation it cannot be that my efforts, my failures, on this earth will be swept away—until I have learned all that this earth can teach me. Will one life suffice? I know better. I have come back, I will come back, time after time till my lessons be learned.

It would seem, I have my own heredity—from my past. Is this not the "Karma" of theosophical writings? The pie here became dogmatic and reminded me that I must distinguish between "theosophical" and the T.S. The Society has no dogma save tolerance of one another's beliefs.

"Manas," the "human soul," has been suggested as possibly dual,—pulling two ways—good and bad—just as there were two reactions from that piece of pie; I wanted it and I did not want it. If the persisting "I that I am" is the "human soul", then it must, in the past, as now, have been the battlefield. But, since the spiritual, as set forth by Madame Blavatsky, rules above the mind, the desire to be better, to better myself, must have existed before, as it exists now. I have inherited that from myself. It is that which determined my choice of heredities. Under the law of free will even my own spiritual soul, that part of me that is one with the universal, a "child of God", a disciple of the Master, cannot force me to be good; and so that will not really happen, my being good, until I have risen above, "slain", the animal and other detrimental heredities, traits and desires.

Mr. Griscom was right (as I have always found him to be): The sins we look at so complacently and live with so comfortably, are deadly sins, either in embryo or behind a not-unpleasing masquerade,—but none the less deadly; none the less to be slain without mercy. And to slay them is our task.

Have we exhausted all our studies of heredities? Have we not seen the possibility that Madame Blavatsky's teachings, elsewhere in the *Secret Doctrine,* about our several lines of descent, or varying heredities, are not as difficult of comprehension as we had, perhaps, fancied? The animal in me and others, the astral, and the other classifications, must trace back to roots. Those roots must have sprung from one main root. Stepping from the general to the particular, becoming personal (as most of us do even when we stand face to face with the universe), is it not evident that I did incarnate (as Madame Blavatsky said) in stages or races, and yet am one?

In this way, when the pie led me back to the Trail Theosophical, I found myself accepting teachings I had never grasped before. Not merely the teaching as to Karma (a form of multiple-heredity from myself, and from others on whom I reacted and who reacted on me), and Reincarnation (a doctrine that restores justice and love to the universe,

while preserving free will), but also as to the stages of incarnation, or the evolution of my soul.

That pie had been made from a receipt handed down from the past. Could I not find in the past a receipt for making a better job of my life? What have I inherited from it? It seems certain, since love rules, that that which I love or desire, that which I hate or shrink from, must be continuous and not sporadic. What joy springs from this thought: those whom I love now I must have loved before. Under the single-life plan my parents, my children, my friends, are accidents in my progress. It is true that modern, western theology teaches us that parents, children and friends are "God-given". But how does this truth fit in with free will? How is it possible that God should arbitrarily place us, willy-nilly, as parents, children and friends? Under the workings of the twin doctrines—Karma and Reincarnation—we move on together, voluntarily holding together, parents, children and friends. Those whom we love are not "accidents". We love them because we have always loved them. We always shall love them. And always shall we be together, unless our sins throw us out of step and thus out of place. Then for a life or so we may miss them. But would we not "inherit", from that missing, so strong a desire to get back, that we would be impelled to get back by our extra effort?

Here my thought ran off to that Council of Constantinople, when, by a small majority, the teaching of reincarnation was banned from the church, though held individually by a large majority of the convention. It was felt that there was danger in the laity's knowing about reincarnation. Too many men would think: "I can drop out, fall back, this life; then catch up the next, so why not sin now?" They would forget Karma, —forget what they were begetting, to be inherited later. Furthermore the real love, in the real part of them, might lead them to seek a new environment, far from their loved ones, so as to protect their loved ones from themselves—yet the latter would inherit a feeling of incompleteness and so suffer. Hence, the vote to stop teaching the great doctrine in its direct, simple form and, instead, to concentrate on "this" life. Is it not indeed true that each "this" life is the most important? Perhaps there is an element of truth, and, therefore, of power, in the single-life-plan teaching for the mass. If I am going to have a desire over a piece of pie; a desire that runs on all-fours with the desire of drunkard and terrier dog; would it not be well to visualize the suffering that I am inviting to myself and to others, in terms of the fire and brimstone of the most Calvinistic hell? Anything is helpful that will arouse me to pull Manas from Kama and pie-hankering, to Buddhi and the Master's will.

As we look on, complacently and even amusedly, at our own and others' desires for "harmless" second helpings of unneeded pie, blinded by Jack Hornerish faith in our goodness, despite our arrant selfishness and self-centredness, so would we not look at our individual pasts in

differing personalities? May this not be why there is divine blindness, probably self-elected, as to our past lives? If I could see myself as an Egyptian in the days of the great Pharaoh, the Pharaoh who snatched victory from defeat against the Hittites, would I be titillated with sensation-memories and strengthened in vanity? or would I have the courage to look then for those evil tendencies, which appear now as sins? Did I know that I followed Roland through Roncevalles would I be flattered? or could I remember how I over-ate then, and flinched before the Paynim —perhaps even turned back with the excuse that I would take tidings to the Great King, and so saved my precious hide, while the Paladins died?

I have said that the mind—Manas—must be the battlefield. I know there is that in me which wants to serve the Master. There must be; whatever I see that I am, however utterly unworthy I am, there must be, for, otherwise Mr. Griscom could not have taken such loving, patient, untiring pains to try to make me better than I am. I also know that I am not what I should be, what I could be. Hence the inevitable conclusion, that even that momentary desire for the taste of pie proves that there is within me an enemy of the Master; an enemy subtly fighting and ever fighting, which must be killed before my Manas is cleaned and made part of the Master's kingdom, instead of being a battlefield. A battle means that there is an enemy present and fighting. I may rejoice that I fight; but I should feel contrition that fighting is still necessary. Did I truly appreciate how greatly victory is needed, would I not fight as I have never fought? Have I the courage to go back through my heredities, also through my past lives, for evidence of the presence of the enemy, and of the injury to others that he has wrought, and wants to wreak to-day? If I realized how he hurts the Master's life that I have inherited, a part of the Master himself, according to the teachings of the Saints and the multiple-cell theory alike, would I not really fight as I have never fought? Not wasting energy in spectacular outer things, but getting down into my own heart, my own hidden desires, hunting the enemy back into his innermost lair? Would I not find that failure to serve my leaders, cowardice in the face of their need, are of the same root as that "amusing" desire for a second piece of pie, or a readiness to sit up late when I ought to go to bed? I want to fight with and for those whom I love, and to earn a trusted place by their side.

I know this is a "want" of mine. I hope it is bigger than the inherited desires, from ancestors and from myself, that are of the enemy. Where does this want, this clean, this cleansing want come from? Has it not also been inherited? Is all the effort made in my behalf in this life to be wasted? Is Mr. Griscom's influence temporary or eternal? The presence of the *Secret Doctrine* on my desk reminds me of Madame Blavatsky's

tale of the Kumaras, the Sons of Light, in the line of our ancestry. Did not our Western Master call us his children, his own? So, it would seem, there may be, there is goodness, yes, greatness, in our lines of heredity. There is good in me which has not died, which cannot die, which is unconquerable. From this thought there must spring an increased (however incomplete) realization of what the Lord meant in his promise that, if we keep his commandments, both he and his Father, will come to us and abide in us. Here is a base for faith, for hope, that we may yet be perfect, "even as the Father in heaven is perfect." It would be ridiculous, blasphemous even, for this outer me to imagine such a state of perfection for himself; but is he all of me? Is he really I? Is it not possible to imagine that real "me" triumphant by the aid of the Father, the Master?

After all, can we ignore the universal, letting it slip off the end of the triangle? or should we not strive toward it, into the infinite, the forever unreachable? Is this not what *Light on the Path, The Voice of the Silence, the Bhagavad Gita, Fragments, The Imitation, The Spiritual Exercises, The Book of Common Prayer* and the Bible all teach?—a unity of teaching in different words?

Suppose I cannot do this in this life? Was any saint ever satisfied with his or her life? Does heredity stop with this me? Can I not build an inheritance for the future? May I not build a new "me" for next time that will more nearly approximate the ideal I can set for myself now? How can I thus build a vehicle for that "new man"? Shall I dream of greatness or shall I fight now? Where can I fight? Why not in that battlefield of Manas? How can I fight? Against any point of the enemy's line, as, for instance that desire for the taste of pie, this tendency to sloth, any fault I see. But fighting calls for organization, for discipline. Is that not to be found in a Rule of Life? Every General seeks to "pin down" his opponent, to fight the battle on ground of his own choosing, not of his adversary's choice. How can I "pin down" my adversary? Can anything entangle him more than a Rule, faithfully adhered to? "Good Heavens," I cried to myself, "but I have been thinking that the Rule hampered me. Why it really hampers that kin of drunkard and terrier, my lower Manas, as pulled down by Kama, the animal side of me."

Behold how right, as always, was Mr. Griscom! A piece of pie, not even eaten, has led me to the very threshold of the Gates of Gold; has shown me that "trivial things" open or bar those great Gates. Furthermore, he was right, eternally right, when, in his *Elementary Articles* (and everywhere) he taught us that the big, triumphant virtues of recollection, aspiration, self-denial and sacrifice, may be exercised and developed against "little sins"—such as a hankering for unneeded pie.

G. W.

THE DANGEROUS REVIVAL OF SPIRITUALISM

FOR several weeks during the winter, a marked feature of the mental activity of New York has been supplied by the lectures of Sir Oliver Lodge, on Spiritualism, as practised by the members of the Society for Psychical Research. The lectures, delivered for the most part to crowded audiences at Carnegie Hall, have been widely announced on the bill-boards, in railroad stations and elsewhere, and have been commented on at length in the newspapers.

Before commenting on the substance and tendencies of these largely attended lectures, let us try to describe one of them, given at Carnegie Hall early in February.

The audience, which fairly filled the hall, was, in appearance, such an audience as attends the symphony concerts for which Carnegie Hall was built; not a gathering of fanatical votaries of Spiritualism, but simply a characteristic crowd of New Yorkers, who were taking in the lectures much as they would take in a new symphony by Rachmaninoff. Spiritualism has ceased to be an oddity, a sign of mental queerness, and has fallen into line with the ordinary topics and activities which occupy New York audiences in the evenings.

As far as the external part of the lecture went, Sir Oliver Lodge played his part well. Wearing his nearly seventy years lightly, he spoke easily, concisely, with notable clarity and consecutiveness; never hurried, never at a loss; quietly stopping, from time to time, to recover the exact phrase of some quotation; easily in command of his audience and his theme, in every way a strikingly good lecturer. Yet, as the hour or more of the lecture went on, one was conscious of a growing feeling of disappointment and depression, a feeling of uneasiness and dissatisfaction. An attempt will presently be made to find its cause.

For anyone who, in a general way, has followed the Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research for the last thirty-five years, there was nothing very novel either in the material of the lecture, or in its conclusions. Sir Oliver Lodge followed the lines of his own experience, beginning with the early days when he was working with Huxley and Tyndall, the close of the period of materialism. In the beginning, he was unwilling even to grant the fact of thought-transference or telepathy; but this scepticism was finally broken down by the weight of fact and experiment, gathered chiefly by Professor W. F. Barrett, of the Dublin College of Science. Professor Barrett had been Tyndall's assistant, and, working under Tyndall, had developed an excellent and conclusive method of experiment, which he transferred from physics to psychical science,

finally furnishing a complete demonstration of the reality of telepathy, for anyone who had the industry to follow the records of his experiments, and the intelligence to understand their meaning.

Sir Oliver Lodge, announcing in his lecture that he had been converted to belief in telepathy, added the very interesting conclusion that thought-transference was not transmitted by any form of wave-motion, brain waves or other. He did not give his reason for this conclusion. We suppose that it is this: All wave-motions, such as light, heat, electricity, obey the law of inverse squares. But this law of diminution does not affect thought-transference, which appears to be wholly independent of distance in space; and is, therefore, presumably not carried by a wave-motion analogous to light.

Sir Oliver Lodge, convinced that thought-transference was a reality, and further convinced that thought was not transmitted by any form of brain-wave or other wave-motion, was thus led to believe in the possibility of one mind communicating directly with another, without the use of any material means of transmission. It remained to be seen whether such transmission was possible, between a mind allied with a body and another mind not so allied; in the ordinary phrase, whether communication with "spirits" was possible.

Numerous sittings with "mediums" followed, the best known being Mrs. Piper. Their results fill thousands of pages of the Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research, in both England and America.

The first hypothesis was, that the medium simply read the mind of the sitter, by means of telepathy, and thus obtained material for messages from dead friends of the sitter. There were, however, messages covering facts not in the mind of the sitter, so far as the sitter was aware; but many of these had been known to the sitter in past years, and had simply sunk below the margin of conscious memory. The second hypothesis was, therefore, that the medium was able, by telepathy, to read not only the conscious, but also the sub-conscious, mind of the sitter.

Then there were facts, at no time known to the sitter, but known to other people, still living, who might be at the other side of the globe. Were these facts gleaned from that distant mind by the exercise of an extraordinary faculty of selective telepathy possessed by the medium, a mental power which was able to roam through space, as it were, until the needed fact was found in someone's mind? It was evident that the telepathic hypothesis was being stretched to near the breaking point.

Mr. F. W. H. Myers was one of the central figures in these inquiries in England, as Mr. R. Hodgson was in the United States. These two men died full of their subject, and firmly determined to "send over" communications which would demonstrate their identity as the source of communications, and thus put the telepathic hypothesis out of court.

A large part of Sir Oliver Lodge's lecture was devoted to an account of the efforts which he believed had been made by Myers, after

his death, to establish his identity as the communicating subject. These evidences fell into two classes: messages which had the peculiar flavour of Myers' mind, with its classical, poetical, psychical colouring; and messages cut up into several parts, each in itself unintelligible; each part being sent through a separate medium, and the parts being brought together at the office of the Society for Psychical Research. These disjointed fragments, which were later fitted together, are the so-called "cross-correspondences" which were canvassed in the daily papers at the time. Sir Oliver detailed a number of them. He added a series of somewhat sensational messages, such as one received from a man who went down with the "Lusitania," psychically received in London before the telegraph brought news of the German infamy; various messages from men killed in the great war, and so on.

Such, in brief, was the substance of the lecture, which appeared to Sir Oliver Lodge satisfactorily to establish the fact of survival. And it seems probable that the clearness and consecutive reasoning of the lecture, taken with the commanding personality and scientific renown of the lecturer, convinced a large part of the audience of the reality of the kind of survival Sir Oliver Lodge believes in.

At this point two criticisms suggest themselves: one purely scientific, and the other moral. To begin with the scientific criticism: the whole of the material described by Sir Oliver Lodge seems to be second-hand material; not only was he himself not the observer of the various psychical states which he described, all his information coming to him through mediums; but even these mediums were not direct observers, since they were generally in different trance conditions while receiving the communications, so that they had no memory of them afterwards. The whole method, therefore, appears to us to be faulty and bad. But there is a graver scientific objection: the observers seem to jump to the conclusion that the communications which they describe are necessarily from human spirits, and they seem convinced that these spirits are, in general, the people whom they represent themselves to be.

Now, while we are ready to admit that, in rare cases, such authentic communications may and do occur, we hold, on the other hand, that the psychical world is infinitely more complex, and its inhabitants infinitely more varied, than these investigators seem to realize. The possibilities of trickery and deception, in that world of reflected images, are endless; what is really going on, we believe, can never be decided by observation within the psychic world itself, even where that observation is direct—as it is not, in the experiences we have been describing; the real facts can be discerned only from the plane above the psychic world, by an observer fully conscious on that plane; and in these experiments, there is no claim at all to that kind of consciousness; hardly any realization, even, that it exists, and must be used if trustworthy conclusions are to be reached.

But there is a far more serious objection, one which gains in weight, the more successful Sir Oliver Lodge is, in conveying to his audiences his own conviction as to "survival."

To put it briefly: He is propagating belief in a non-moral, if not actually an immoral, immortality. For anyone who heard his lectures and accepted his conclusions, it would be quite natural to say: Let us eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we—live!

There was no point in the lecture to which we listened, or in any of these lectures, so far as we can learn, at which it was made clear that real immortality must be fought for and attained, in a conflict every step of which calls for sacrifice, high valour, faith and purity of heart. Spiritual life had, apparently, no part in the matter; survival came as automatically as growth and old-age.

But, if we are right, thus to detach immortality from the realities of spiritual life, from the genuinely religious qualities, is to do a supremely dangerous thing. Let us try to bring this out, by what may appear an extreme illustration:

Let us suppose that the Powers of Good are ceaselessly striving to raise the consciousness of mankind to the spiritual plane, the plane of what we may call Buddhi-Manas, the plane of genuine immortality. And let us at the same time suppose that the Powers of Evil, aware that consciousness is inextinguishable, are trying might and main to limit human consciousness to their own plane, the highest plane which, being Powers of Evil, they themselves can reach: what has been called the plane of Kama-Manas; their object being, to keep human consciousness and human life within their own reach, within their own power, on a plane on which they can "feed on" it, so to speak.

Which of these forces, the Powers of Good, or the Powers of Evil, is helped by the work which Sir Oliver Lodge has in hand? Is it not quite evident that he is limiting the whole idea of immortality to the psychical plane, the plane of Kama-Manas, and is thus playing directly into the hands of the Powers of Evil? Some realization of this inevitable tendency of his work caused the sense of despondency and depression which the hearing of his lecture aroused, as has been recorded.

If men can gain immortality without holiness, and Sir Oliver Lodge appears to teach this, and even to teach that it is practically impossible not to attain immortality; then holiness is a superfluity; the whole of the religious life, in the deeper sense, is mere waste of time. Such a belief cannot fail to immoralize and sensualize the whole conception of immortality; it cannot fail to lead people to stop short of the supreme effort and sacrifice which, in our belief, are essential for the attainment of true immortality. The whole tendency, therefore, of this teaching is dangerous in the last degree. It makes for evil, and not for good.

If we reach this conclusion, and it appears to be unavoidable, then the question arises: How does it come that a man of Sir Oliver Lodge's

attainments, his scientific earnestness, his unquestioned devotion to truth, is thus led into a direction of work which we believe to be spiritually disastrous?

The answer which suggests itself to our minds, is this: Sir Oliver Lodge has, we believe, been engaged in pyschical research, with other members of the Society for Psychical Research, for thirty-five years or more. That Society was, in 1884, deeply interested in the work of Mme. H. P. Blavatsky, and in those teachings, given to the world through her, which many of us believe to be the teachings of the Lodge of Masters. At that time, therefore, the members of that Society, including Sir Oliver Lodge, were given the opportunity either greatly to help, or greatly to hinder, the beneficent work for the world which the Lodge of Masters had in hand.

Whether from innate scepticism, from cowardice, from sheer stupidity, or from whatever cause, they took, as a body, the baser way. Their agent, Richard Hodgson, who was at no time witness of any of the phenomena which he undertook to judge, based his whole case on hearsay, and on the testimony of avowed enemies. To put it on the best footing, that was stupid and fundamentally unscientific. But this obtuseness of method and conclusion was, after due consideration, adopted by the Society for Psychical Research, which undertook to brand Mme. Blavatsky as "an interesting fraud," and this, because of their action, has become the official view of that splendid martyr to spiritual truth.

Had the Society for Psychical Research possessed what the old-fashioned phrase of the Prayer Book calls "grace, wisdom and understanding;" had they first understood, and then courageously supported, the genuine spiritual teachings which were then within their reach, the result might have been incalculable good for the whole human race. But, as we have said, they took the baser way. And it seems to us that, through the operation of Karmic law, because they refused to work the works of light, they are now led to work the works of darkness. Having had a superb opportunity to forward the true spirituality, the knowledge of the true immortality, and having, after full deliberation, turned their backs upon that "open door of heaven," they find themselves, these five and thirty years, floundering in the morass of psychism, teaching a false immortality and, by that teaching, undermining the spiritual life of mankind.

Sir Oliver Lodge did not take, it is true, any prominent part in the attack made by the Society for Psychical Research on Mme. Blavatsky in 1885. But neither did he take any part in defending her against attack. He is, therefore, it seems to us, fully implicated in the Karma of obscurantism and delusion incurred by the Society; and he is, day by day, in these lectures of his on non-moral immortality, not so much paying the penalty, as incurring ever deeper indebtedness. There can be no graver spiritual offence than to keep back spiritual light from mankind, by attacking and defaming the bringers of the light. C. J.

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

Students' Conferences

IT was at the close of one of our more serious sessions that the Scribe was persuaded to give us extracts from his notes of former conferences, which we were all agreed would be of interest to the readers of the "Screen." It was really due to the impulsiveness of the Youth—which led him to ask before he fully realized how much it might involve. He had been talking with the Philosopher, continuing the theme of the conference.

"How clear such talks make it," he had said, "that whatever other means may be tried, we are ultimately forced back upon love as the only power which can be really effective. I sometimes think that every question can be resolved into one: How to love?"

"True," the Philosopher had agreed. "But when you attempt to answer it, you find that another has taken its place: How to know? Surely, if we had knowledge, we would love."

"But is it not equally sure that we cannot know until we love?" the Youth answered. "And so, if my question leads to yours, yours comes back again to mine. It is the closed circle that is so baffling."

"And yet," interjected the Sage, "we know the way by which it opens, and, being opened, becomes no longer a circle, but an ever ascending spiral—greater love leading to clearer knowledge, and clearer knowledge to greater love."

The Youth looked up at him quickly. "I know, of course, what you mean," he said. "Obedience."

"Yes," the Sage answered, "obedience. It is the key to most things that seem closed to us. And I think the reason is simple. It is dynamic, and adds another dimension. Neither love nor knowledge is solid and real without it; and what we take for them are but their projections on the Manasic plane. Look down upon an ascending spiral—a helix, if I must use the correct term—so that you see it as projected on a horizontal plane, and it appears as the closed circle of which you speak. Yet in itself it is not closed, but mounts higher at each turn."

The Scribe had been listening, and here turned to the Sage. "We see it more clearly than we did ten years ago. Do you remember our conferences with X— upon that very point?"

"I am not likely to forget them," the Sage replied. "They meant too much to all of us. But, I am sorry to say, they were not in my mind as I was speaking. X—'s teaching has a way of coming back to me as my own thought."

"I wish that I had been there," said the Youth, "for though I grant the truth of all the Sage says, the practical difficulty persists. We do not

love enough; we do not know enough, we do not obey enough. Why? It is not something that can be dismissed in a sentence."

"It was not dismissed in a sentence," the Scribe assured him. "I must have a hundred pages of notes upon that point alone."

"Notes of your conferences with X—!" the Youth exclaimed eagerly. "Can't we see them?"

He broke off abruptly, for he began to realize how much he had asked. But the Sage, moved by his eagerness, came to his support; and thereupon a general clamour arose, which the Scribe could not resist. He left the room, and shortly returned with a large portfolio, from which he selected a heavy fibre envelope, marked "1910," and containing an unfolded manuscript two or three inches thick.

"I can, of course, give you only extracts," he said. "The more personal parts of the records would not be of general interest—though it is always in the efforts to put the teaching into practice that its real significance is seen. And you will remember that they are but my own notes; accurate, I think, so far as they go, but reflecting only what I was myself able to understand and assimilate of X—'s comments and answers to our questions.

"The conferences dealt for some months—from April to June—with the general problem the Youth propounded, and, of course, we often returned to it later. We met and discussed it among ourselves, and then submitted the results of our study to X— for criticism and further suggestions. But all this you will see for yourselves, and, as it is getting late, I had better read what I can without further comment."

March 30th, 1910.

Two questions were proposed for consideration:

1. How to acquire and conserve energy. 2. Prayer.

After discussion it was found that these questions, and others in our minds, were but different aspects of the single question presented by our present situation, as it concerns ourselves collectively.

We desire more energy. How may we acquire it? Is our lack more a question of leakage, or of insufficient flow? If the latter, how may we renew and augment the sources of energy? If the former, how may we conserve our energies, and that which is given us, and avoid their dissipation. The crux of our problem is here. The time appears ripe for a further advance, for a stricter regulation of our lives, for meditation upon various sides of the inner life. We can see that a greater strictness might conserve energy, could it be attained and maintained as a matter of habit. But our question seeks to go behind this and to ask, Where are we to gain the energy to do what we now know to be desirable, and to reach and establish ourselves on a higher level? How can we gain the capital to live economically?

We are aware that increased energy follows unremitting will and

ardent love. We are aware that leakage is diminished by poise, calm, regularity, and recollection. But in our efforts in both these directions, we experience times of apparent exhaustion, of apparent bankruptcy of will and force, and in these periods we are led to give over our practices and to seek recuperation. Our question asks how these periods may be avoided.

April 2nd, 1910.

In reply to our first question we learned that whether our work and efforts exhausted us or not, depended in large measure upon our attitude of heart and mind in working. It was essential that we should learn to work with entire concentration and detachment, and complete inner oneness with the Master. While we keep this close sense of the Master's presence, looking always back to him, seeking to work as though from him or as though he were acting in us, then there is no break in the connection, the line of energy is clear and unobstructed back to the source, and that which we expend is supplied as it is used.

When we fail in detachment or recollection and become absorbed in our work, this connection is at least temporarily broken or attenuated, and the source of supply interrupted. We work then with our own reserve of strength and exhaust it. When we fail in concentration the same effect results: we do with difficulty and with a heavy drain upon one part of us, what should be done easily with all our powers united. When, in addition, we grow fevered and anxious in our work, we pour out a great flow of ineffective energy,—as though we tried to fill a narrow necked bottle from a bucket, in haste and with no funnel;—only a small part of what we expend is actually useful in accomplishing our ends. Recollection and detachment are the keys we need, with concentration.

With regard to periods of exhaustion, we learned that it is dangerous to let our practices lapse. In such cases or times of invalidism, the advice given is to fulfil the practices "with the eyes shut," without the driving power we put into them in times of health, but which we no longer have available. The reason for this is that it is generally far easier to force ourselves to repeat a prayer, or to perform some accustomed outer act of recollection, than it is to keep ourselves in some right attitude of heart and mind that requires an inner pressure. Forcing ourselves to the outer observance is thus the lesser effort, and the karma of these observances, the force we have put into them in the past, lifts the heart and mind, and keeps them from falling back until we are again ourselves.

There may be exceptional cases where this is reversed, and where the preservation of the inner attitude seems easier than the effort to fulfil the observances. In such, it must be no serious illness or exhaustion, only a weariness of the bodily or mental forces,—that does not go deep. But it is necessary to be very closely on our guard, for the gravest danger exists when we see none; and when we are content with our inner attitude

and insight, we may ask ourselves whether this feeling of security is not part of our blindness. The exhaustion which prompts us to abandon outer observances may be less dangerous when it leaves us or makes us conscious that our inner state is not what it should be, than when it makes us feel our inner attitude to be right and secure, but our lower selves to be overworked and needing rest.

We were further reminded that the presence of great issues and great love caused weariness to be forgotten and to disappear. So invalids rise from bed and run when the house is on fire; so a man, dog-tired, will rise and run, his fatigue forgotten, to save some one he loves, his whole being concentrated on his love, the danger, and what he seeks to do. It was suggested that did we so love, and had we a true realization of the greatness of the issues that impended, we should think less and suffer less from weariness.

We had been told that while the lay-chêla was always left a margin between his strength and the tasks set him, the accepted chêla was tried to the uttermost. We asked the reason for this, and learned that we thought too much of chêlaship as a fixed state. To understand it we must think of it as a period of transition, as the flight of an arrow to its mark, or as the incubation of an egg under the unremitting heat of vital forces which could not for a moment cease without death.

Again we were reminded that the accepted chêla was one whose love was wholly given. Therefore the whole longing of his being would be to be led forward with a speed only measured by the utmost of his capacity. It would be the demand of his own love, and the will of the Master's love.

To the difference between the lay and accepted chêla we were again led back, and it was pointed out to us that the process indicated in *Letters that Have Helped Me* must be fulfilled by all. The chêla must make himself such; the lay-chêla must, in like manner, make of himself an accepted chêla, in life and in inner attitude, before that acceptance is made by the Master. He must make his own rules and live by them. We could do this either individually, or collectively in consultation.

April 9th, 1910.

A study of the reply we had received to our first question at the last conference, showed that it had also answered our second question, and it became apparent that what we now needed to know was *"How to love?"* It was agreed to ask this question, as it was clear to us that there was a depth and passion of love which transformed sacrifice into golden opportunity, and swept weariness and self for ever out of sight when service could be rendered. We recalled the Master's one plea: "Give me your heart," and it was agreed that our deepest wish was to give it more completely. We recalled also that the fate of a Master is always at stake, dependent in large part upon those to whom he has given himself, and what can be given back to him from them.

It was agreed that we must each seek to make what we are given and told, dynamic and living in our lives.

It was agreed that we should unite in an hourly aspiration of love toward the Master.

April 16th, 1910.

We reported the result of our study of the week before, and asked "How to love?"

In reply we were told that the obstacle to our loving lay in our ignorance of the Master; that to love him more deeply and passionately required only that we know him better; that he was such that all who knew him must love him with an intensity of passionate devotion, measured only by their perception of what he, in truth, is. Therefore the question were better put "How to know the Master?" When so stated the answer was given in the first chapter of the *Imitation of Christ:*

"Whosoever then would fully and feelingly understand the words of Christ, must endeavour to conform his life wholly to the life of Christ."

To know the Master, we must endeavour to conform our lives to his.

It was stated that this was known to us, and that on such a general subject little could be said to us which was not known.

We said it seemed to us that we were caught in a circle of endeavour and of question: "How to love the Master? How to know him that we may love him? How to conform our lives to his that we may know him? How to gain the will so to conform? How to love that we may gain the will?" We said we knew that we must seek to expand our lives from within this circle by pressure upon each of its parts, thus widening the whole. But we had thought that in love, more than elsewhere, was the key to the whole, and the dynamic power that might set us free.

We learned that the pressure must truly be upon all points, but that with some the first advance was through love, with others through the will, with others, again, through perception.

We said that we perceived that this was so; but one of us said we had no right to be so easily satisfied. This was the general path, the safe path for all. But to those who were strong enough there must be here as elsewhere a shorter road. We wished to know this road, and to strive to follow it. It was of this that we wished to ask again and again, until it was revealed to us.

In response we were told that there was a shorter path for the strong of will,—as a man could become an adept in five minutes, if he had the strength of will. This path was in the will itself. But those who tried it could not grow tired, could not have periods of relapse when their efforts slackened. If we asked this question for a shorter path, the reply could be made, "Why do you not look and see the Master? Daily you go where he, or some of his disciples, are. Look at them, and as you see you will love, and as you love, follow."

The trouble is we are blind. The Master, and all for which we strive, are still, to a large measure, but partly real to us. We need to make them more real. One way to make them more real is through constant acts of recollection and conformity. The Master is in truth always near us. We should try to realize this and to look to him, doing all things as in his service and in his presence. It is here also that a rule of life and daily discipline will help us to keep this recollected spirit.

The question we asked "How to love?" and the other questions which form the circle with it, are dynamic, and can only be solved dynamically,—not with words or information, but through living, loving, seeing, willing.

April 23rd, 1910.

We reviewed the notes of the previous conference, and came to perceive more clearly that the way to love was through realization of the thing or character to be loved; that if we could know the Master we could not help loving as we wished. The circle of which we had spoken was seen to be inevitable, because the different phases and aspects were simultaneous methods of approach. To the statement of the short-cut we sought, it was recalled that X— had added that this must be discovered by the individual, and involved the uprooting of something in the nature which stood as a barrier, and which had to be eliminated.

To what extent the answer given us was unsatisfactory, we perceived was due to ourselves: as we evoke the replies made. It was agreed that we should make a mistake to accept anything as all that could be given, as, if we make a greater demand, and use more wisely what is given, we can get more. We should never let go of our question in mind or heart. It was an ultimate question, the ultimate question of mind and heart and life. We could not expect it to be answered immediately so that we could understand. The saints had prayed and struggled and meditated upon such a question throughout their lives, and we must not be discouraged. We had a great advantage which some of them had not, for we had clearer intellectual comprehension, the opportunity for a communion more clearly understood. We should not be satisfied until we had an answer which made us say: "Now I know."

We felt that we had gained in the last week, but that such an answer as we sought could not be ours until we were able to see and talk with the Master face to face. To this end we should need concerted effort, and genuine harmony, real solidarity among ourselves, so that our thought should be that some one of us should reach that point, with no thought of personality or sense of personal property in the effort or result.

We perceived that in conforming our lives to the Master we should have to be purged of the sense of separateness,—that this was the supreme matter that he laid stress upon. As we allayed this sense of separateness in ourselves, we should remove the barriers that stand

between us and him, and as we practised loving each other we should learn to love him.

One of us reported that in a private talk with X—, after our last conference, persistence had been praised as a great power, but that at the same time he had been told that the way to pull a plant up by the roots was not to continue to tug at the stem when it refused to move. Such a type of persistence lacked intelligence, and resulted only in breaking off the stem which gave us our hold. We should rather seek to loosen the ground all around the roots, approaching them from every side. So should we approach an answer to such fundamental questions as we sought.

Again it was suggested that if we could not get an answer from one person we might ask another.

Considering these suggestions it was agreed that we should strive to go to other members of the Lodge and ask them; to Master K. H.; to Master H. P. B., etc.; and to any others of whom we might know and perhaps reach, as, for instance, an Egyptian chêla of one of the Masters, who had been here once when others were away at the Lodge Convention.

It was agreed, also, that we should seek indirect methods of approach, and that if questions occurred to any of us as a promising line of attack, they should be sent to one of us designated to receive them.

May 17th, 1910.

We presented the following, which had been suggested by one of us as a mode of approach to our main question, but which had not been discussed among ourselves, owing to lack of opportunity.

We have asked how to love. We wish to give the Master our hearts, fully and completely, and we perceive that our hearts are not ours to give, but are caught and rooted in a myriad ways. *How are we to gain control of our own hearts?* We perceive that there are many directions where the ties must be deliberately cut, but to uproot all the lesser tendrils would be an endless task. Are we right in thinking that the way to proceed here is to seek to cause them to die from inanition, directing our thought and attention and as much of our life force as will follow our aspiration, to the highest that we can reach? If we could learn to love what the Master loves, it would seem to us that we should draw nearer to him, and that this would free our hearts from their present ties so that they could truly be given him. Should we, for example, try to love formlessness?

In reply we are told that the self-conscious love of formlessness was quite beyond us; it was something beyond even the self-conscious realization of a Master.

The process of seeking to love what the Master loved, was the equivalent of seeking to meditate upon the Higher Self, upon the highest which each of us could conceive, or to which he could aspire. Even so

we should fall short. But we were right in believing, as indeed we had been told, that this process of seeking impersonally the highest was a process which should accompany our effort to draw near to the Master and to think of ourselves as his disciples.

We were told, further, that we were right to set ourselves such a question as we had done, but that the way to get it answered was through a carefully thought out and worked out series of questions. The answer could only be given step by step, and each step must be assimilated and lived. We could gain little by seeking different words or phrases to express the same question in the same generality.

We were told that we could remember *that one thing the Master loved was the work.* If we sought to love what he loved we should learn to love the work, really to love it with our full hearts. The beginning of this was already ours, but we could carry it much further, and gain something of what we sought by doing so.

We asked whether there was any special thing the Masters would have us do. We said we were earnestly desirous of doing all that we could, and that if we could know more clearly we would strive to accomplish it. We felt that this was a question we should like to ask at each conference: Is there any special thing we have forgotten or overlooked, or that the Master would wish us to do?

In reply we were reminded of the work that had been entrusted to us and which was now in our hands. This was what he had entrusted to us; working here, we should be and were working for him and in his work; loving this, we should be loving what he loved.

June 14th, 1910.

Before returning to the more specific questions, and leaving the general statement of the problem of "How to love?" X— wished to be sure that we had understood what it had been attempted to make clear to us, and which could be rephrased thus:

To know the Master we need to love him; to love the Master we need to know him. These two are but different aspects of one thing. Their reconciliation and the key to their attainment lies in *obedience.* Love, communion, obedience, constitute the trinity of the disciple's path. It is for this reason that such stress is laid upon obedience in all systems of occultism and religious teaching. It is the key and the door to love and to knowledge. From where we are, and at all times, we can obey. This obedience is not alone to specific directions,—we can expect few such,—but to *every indication of the Master's will and mind.* He whose heart is set upon obedience grows into both knowledge and love; into knowledge of the Master's mind by constantly seeking it in every indication, into love of the Master through this greater knowledge and through the attunement of his will to the Master's will.

Returning to the question of how we might gain *greater energy:* we were told that this question was framed too generally. It was the

object of all we were seeking to do, if viewed from one standpoint, and we had best try to get at it through more specific questions dealing with detailed points.

Returning to the question of *prayer,* it was suggested that each one of us would probably approach this question from a different standpoint, and with different detailed questions, and that therefore it might be well for each of us in turn to frame the questions in our minds, presenting them at separate conferences.

A—beginning the questioning, we gathered from answers that:

The word prayer is used to designate widely varying acts and movements of mind and will and heart. The results of these acts, the answers to the prayer, vary as the acts themselves. The machinery of the act, and the result flowing from it, depend upon the degree of advancement of the man who prays,—his development as a disciple, and his connection with the Lodge.

The question was put: *"What happens when the ordinary man prays?"* as it was sought to begin with the unintelligent, undeveloped man, and work thence to a knowledge of what happens in the prayer of those more closely and consciously connected with the Masters. Prayer, here, was used to denote a wish of the heart, consciously expressed and directed, in the mind of the man praying, to some spiritual Being or power.

The following possibilities were suggested:

Many prayers, particularly those which might be regarded as selfish, yet which appeared to have an answer, were answered by the *power of the man's own will.* The intensity of his will, expressing itself in prayer, expressed itself also in a demand which accomplished its desire.

Prayer brings man into *relation with his own Higher Self,* and the answer to his prayer may come from his Higher Self. It is possible, also, that the prayer is but the reflection or response of the personality to the will of the Higher Self, which the man feels as an appeal or pressure upon him, and acknowledges, consciously or unconsciously, in prayer for what the Higher Self wills. The answer to the prayer in this case results from the personality acknowledging as its own, the will of the Higher Self, which is then done.

The *mass of people are not individualized,* and in consequence their prayer and will are not individualized. Therefore their prayers are, in the inner world, impersonal and indefinite appeals for light or force, and are answered from the general store of light or force upon which they draw, and are only made specific on the plane of personality, the sole plane upon which the demand and prayer was specific and individualized. It would be very rare for the prayer of such an one to reach to the personal consciousness of a Master.

Nevertheless, the fact that a member of any real religious body aspires and prays, brings that member into some *relation with the Master at its head.* Here we must remember again that the whole mechanism and reach of prayer and its answer depend upon *the interior development*

of the one praying. The prayer may only reach as an impersonal appeal to the universal spiritual powers, or it may reach the Master impersonally,—as did the touch of the woman upon the robe of Jesus, so that he perceived only "that virtue had gone out of him;" or it may reach him clearly and directly, even as it is prayed, and as though it were made to him face to face.

Again, in order to understand prayer we must remember the *two sides of the Lodge;* the active and the meditative. The work of the latter division is wholly inner, wholly concerned with meditation and prayer, and with the generation through these of the force the active side uses. Every aspiration and unselfish prayer (true prayer) augments this total store of spiritual force. It is a gift or a loan to the meditative side of the Lodge, and as such constitutes a debt which must be paid, and which always is paid. Thus *true prayer can never fail of an answer.*

In closing we were told that there was one matter X— wished to tell us, and which should be a matter of encouragement to us. We were always nearer to the Master than we realized. It was one of the paradoxes of occultism that *the nearer we drew to the Master, the farther away he seemed to us,*—for, as we grew towards him, we became more clearly conscious of our shortcomings and our faults. If we understand this, we shall not be discouraged, and it is right that we should understand it, and take courage and hope from it.

June 21st, 1910.

We considered the last statement made to us, that the nearer we drew to the Master the further away we seemed.

In addition to the clearer light his nearness threw upon our shortcomings,—so that we became more clearly conscious of our unlikeness to him,—it seemed that there might be some such principle operative as is illustrated in looking in a mirror. So long as we see the Master in the mirror of the mind, the further we rise above its plane toward where he is, the greater is the distance our sight must travel, so that as we draw near him he seems to recede further from us. If this analogy be correct, it shows us that the process would continue until we reach to him, and he stretches out his hand and touches us, and we look no more in the mirror but to where he stands beside us. The time must come when we see him in a new way; no longer "as in a glass darkly," but as "face to face."

June 28th, 1910.

B— being asked to begin the questioning, obtained confirmation of the fact that one of the first effects of prayer was to purify the aura, to clear the passage to the spiritual planes, and to make it easier to receive guidance, perhaps always given, but in general not clearly received because of the murkiness of the personal aura.

The questions were then directed to the difficulty in many minds of reconciling the view of the universe as a universe of law, with any effectiveness of personal prayer. In answer it was suggested that the recon-

ciliation lay in remembering that physical and outer things were but the shadows of spiritual things, and physical law but the shadow of spiritual law. When we considered spiritual law, the apparent difficulty disappeared, for there prayer was a spiritual force. If prayer seemed, in being granted, to violate physical law, we should view it as a substitution of the reality for the shadow,—a moving outward of spiritual law, supplanting physical law. Thus if, as the result of prayer, fire should not burn a hand thrust in it, the explanation could be sought in the externalization of the psychic body, itself impervious to fire, and acting as a screen between the flame and the physical hand.

July 5th, 1910.

The notes of the previous conference were supplemented by recalling that the personality had been likened to "the shadow of a great bird." The shadow sweeps over the earth, moving forward and back, to right or left, but is always and only a shadow, always confined to the plane on which it falls. The bird itself is the reality, and the reality is not so confined, but soars freely in space, and the laws of its motion are the laws of a higher dimensionality than those which appear to confine the shadow if we look only to the shadow. So we should regard all physical and personal things as the shadow of spiritual law, and looking back to the spirit, be not confused by the transformations of the shadow. The "other world" is the real world, "this world" is the shadow world.

Again it was recalled that X— had reminded us of the description in one of the *Fragments* (p. 18), where from a mountain top the Master looks down upon the world and sees the lights of aspiration, and that this simile had been carried further as illustrative of the reach of prayer. As we ascend the mountain, and from different heights look back upon a village at its foot, at first we see each separate light, however feeble, shining in each window. But as we continue to ascend, the lesser lights are lost, and only appear as part of the general glow, the stronger lights alone standing out individually. At still greater heights these, too, may be merged, and all we see is the faint glow far beneath us.

So with the Master on the mountain top, and his messengers and disciples on all the intermediate levels to the world beneath. These messengers can see the individual lights and cherish them, can hear the individual prayers and carry to the heights those which would not reach there of their own unaided power.

Still again it was recalled that in personal prayers, the prayers where the personality prays for some personal and perhaps material possession, it is "a shadow praying for a shadow." Yet it is the shadow of something real; the shadow of the soul, the real man, praying for the real possessions of the soul. And so the prayer may be answered there in the real world, by attainment of the real man's real possessions. Could we once grasp this fact, that all this world is but a shadow, and the other world the real, then we should see that all prayers are answered.

Q.

LETTERS TO STUDENTS

August 16th, 1913.

DEAR ———

I do not know why we were unable to get away this year—so far, for we may still get off. It happens every two or three years. I suppose we do not really need a rest every year, although it certainly seems to us that we do, or rather, each one thinks all the others need a rest badly! I mean of course that I do not know the inner reason. There are always plenty of outer reasons, but they must necessarily be only the expression of some inner condition. We do not realize this truth, as a matter of fact, but fret and fume over outer things, obstacles and hindrances to our desires, while all the while, they are nothing but the mechanical results of inner conditions which we know nothing about, or which we ignore.

Our not getting away may be because we are not good enough, or it may be because the work needs capital, spiritual capital. This any movement gets from the sacrifice, prayers, and efforts of its members; done with intention, or more or less ignorantly, as the case may be. For instance the pain and suffering of poor ———, or your recent physical pain, both due you by Karma, can both be used by the Master, for his work, if you offer it up to him. This need not be done specifically. It is sufficient, though not so effective, if the general direction of our life and thought is in the proper direction. The law is that the intention of the effort is used for the purpose for which it was intended, but the *fruit* of the spiritual act, is used for the individual. If you pray for ———, of Portugal, they benefit from your prayers, but you also benefit from the spiritual fruit of your prayers, until you no longer need that kind of help, and then this additional power, and an enormously potent power it is, can be used by the Master for others. This is what happens to the Saints, and is the reason why their prayers are so effective. When we pray for any one, they get the benefit of our prayer, and we get the benefit of the spiritual fruit of our act, so long as, under Karma, we need it. After that point is reached the person or thing prayed for gets it all, and as the spiritual fruit of an act of prayer is a hundred times stronger than the direct power of the prayer, you will see what an increase of force there is, as we grow holy.

I do not know if this interests you. I go into it as a general answer to many of your written or unwritten queries.

You must watch your reactions. I notice that your poor days of spiritual dryness follow specially good days. Do not strain, for that always leads to reaction. Try, but try gently, serenely, persistently. Never strain.

The barrier between you and the Master is a purely mental one. You *think* you cannot hear him, and so long as you think that, you cannot. In a sense it is self-hypnotism. I have known people who could and actually did hear from the Master several years before they knew they did, or realized they could. Then, one day, they woke up to the fact that a certain kind of thought which arose in their minds or consciousness, while meditating, really came from him. After that it was plain sailing. The trouble is that we expect him to say something wonderful, some deep spiritual truth: we have in mind "Fragments," or some saying in the New Testament; while, as a matter of fact, *all* he *can* say to any one of us is what our minds and brains are already prepared for. As likely as not the first thing we ever hear from him will be "Dear child, I love you, but you are tired. Do not try any more now, but come to me later." Or "Dear child, your efforts are acceptable to me. Continue and all will be well." Remember that he is tactful and considerate to a degree, and always speaks to our condition, to our preconceptions, disposition, mental bias and our need. But he cannot put into our heads, without using a dangerous degree of force, words or thoughts or ideas which are not already there, in part, at least. An idea must be *acceptable* to our mind. If we think we are bad, he cannot tell us we are good. We would not hear it, or take it in. That is not a good illustration, for, as a matter of fact, he *can* tell us the opposite of something in our minds, because that thing is there. He can talk to us about ourselves long before he can talk to us about others, and still longer before he can give us specific directions about anything. There are many more complications about these things than we realize, but there is no use going into more of them now.

I do believe, however, that if you were to make a practice, at your best time each day, of having a talk with the Master, telling him whatever is in your heart, and then waiting, and writing down at once, whatever thoughts seem to rise up in your mind, you would find it a very illuminating process. Send these to me, and be very careful of anything of the nature of psychism or of negativeness when you do this.

You should not try to remember your past lives, but inevitably, in time, you will come to some knowledge of such past lives and experiences as will help you now. It is almost always painful knowledge, for it is knowledge of wasted opportunity, of failure, of sin. For we grow through a succession of failures. We snatch victory out of defeat. If you have definite ideas, and do not object, let me know of them. It might be a check.

The best way to check an intuition, especially an intuition to *do* something, is by common sense.

I hope we still may have the pleasure of seeing you this year, but if not, it will be because that is best for all of us.

With kind regards, I am, Sincerely yours,

C. A. Griscom.

September 26th, 1913.

DEAR ———

* * * * * * *

I do not know just what you think meditation is. Suppose you define your idea of it for me. I suspect you make it something too remote from your habitual consciousness. It is and it isn't. And nearly everyone passes through a period of confusion here.

Meditation is being conscious in and with Higher Manas, instead of Lower Manas. Most people are unable to do this because their Higher Manas exists only in embryo. But once you have a Higher Manas, and you have, then we function in it much more than we realize at first, for there is no glaring difference in the kind of consciousness we have. It is more a question of quality, and what we are conscious of.

The Master, and spiritual experience in general, are much closer to us than we imagine at first. Indeed they *are* us. It is the only way we have them. Thereafter we ought not to look for something outside that comes to us, even if it comes interiorly; but for something that *is* us and arises in us. These distinctions are subtle and very difficult to express in words, but they are very real and are barriers which we must surmount one by one. Remember that the Higher Manas of the disciple is a part of the Higher Manas of the Master, and when he communicates with his disciples he thinks with that part of his brain which is also the disciple's brain. And the disciple "gets" his thought, by thinking it with his Higher Manas. Now the Higher Manas can think thoughts that do not come from the Master. Therefore the problem is to learn to distinguish between the thoughts of Higher Manas which are thought by the Master and, hence, are "communications," and the thoughts which are not directly from the Master. This distinction is a difficult one, and can only be learned by long practice. As a matter of fact, the disciple actually does "hear" from the Master long before he thinks or knows he does.

I want to save you, if I can, some of this almost inevitable postponement of your desires.

Of course being able to do this is what constitutes a disciple. People call themselves disciples before then; but technically they are only would-be disciples. They are trying to become disciples. The degree to which our consciousness is a part of the Master's, measures our degree of discipleship. This varies to an infinite extent, and is a question of past development as well as what we have done in our present life. Few of us have reached the point, in this Kali Yuga, which we have reached in the past. So we are going over old ground. But, while it is easier to go over old ground than to break new, the times are very much against any kind of spiritual attainment. So I suspect that the balance is against us if anything. (Of course the *odds* are enormously against us. I used the wrong words.) Anyone who can make any progress at

all in times like these, a disciple who volunteers for work and comes into incarnation and does not go *down hill* steadily, is doing splendidly. That risk, and a great risk it is, is the great sacrifice he makes.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely yours,
C. A. GRISCOM.

DEAR ———— October 27th, 1913.

* * * * * * *

Please be particularly careful about practical and outer things. It is very difficult for the Master to give us advice about such things, for we do not go to him with free minds. We are always biased, one way or another. Doubt nearly always means a struggle between our consciousness and our desires: and we ask for advice, hoping to have our preferences backed up. As they usually are not backed up, it has become almost a proverb that people do not follow advice. So be careful when you go to him about outer things, and always check any ideas you get with common sense.

I was interested in your definition of meditation, which is excellent so far as it goes. The mind cannot know the Master and cannot function on the plane where he and the soul live. Meditation is the effort we make to develop the part of us which can know the Master and which can function on the inner plane. It is the real mind as distinguished from the mind of the personality.

With kind regards, I am Sincerely,
C. A. GRISCOM.

DEAR ———— February 12th, 1914.

* * * * * * *

I think the most definite idea that I have at the moment is that we must not let these matters become routine and perfunctory, as everything has a tendency to become which we do daily for a long time;—even our prayers. I do not mean by this that I think you have allowed yourself to fall into this fault, but I do think that you would be wise to think of it and to guard against it. It is a little bit difficult for me to say all that is in my mind on this subject without seeming to make claims which it would be quite inadmissible for me to make, but I shall try to write out certain general statements from which you can draw your own conclusions. I enclose a little paper which refers to some of these general laws. But I want to go a step further than this with you. Please return the paper when you have read and digested it.

The Master can of course reach the *heart* and the *mind* of any human being, and he often does. But it nearly always takes an expenditure of

force and leads to an inevitable reaction which makes his doing so desirable only in cases of emergency and for specific purposes. He often speaks to our *souls,* and this advice and encouragement and love which he gives us in this way, come down through the different planes of our nature into our waking consciousness, in different degrees of definiteness in every human being, depending upon our state of progress and purification. When he first desires to, or sees the possibility of rousing a soul, he will make such an effort directly himself, perhaps repeated several times. Such a person may have very marvellous experiences. But always, after this awakening has been accomplished, the ordinary laws of the spiritual world apply, and it may be years before the Master finds it wise to communicate directly with the *waking consciousness* of that person. Nearly all the Saints speak of this period of dryness, during which they feel that they have been deserted, during which they miss those spiritual consolations to which they had grown accustomed and upon which they leaned for support, consolation and inspiration. At such times they had to learn to rely upon their comrades, their director, their superior.

One such general spiritual law is that no one can reach the spiritual world, can reach the Master (which is a different thing from the Master reaching him), without the help, not only of his superiors, but also his equals and his inferiors. Therefore each neophyte must have a director, and must also pass on to others all of the knowledge and inspiration which he has received himself, so that when the critical moment comes he has available the kind of help which he must have to attain his goal.

It takes years to learn how to get the full benefit from one's spiritual adviser; it takes years to enter into the common life and consciousness of others; and it takes years to train and pass on to others the help which we have ourselves received. In carrying out this general law of discipleship, which you will see in practical operation in every convent and monastery which is worthy of the name, the Master of course has to use the material which is available. One of the things which he does is to supplement the deficiencies of the spiritual director, either by guiding him in various ways, or by adjusting and correcting his work with his postulants; the point being that, especially in the East, the office of little guru is looked up to with hardly less reverence than the Master himself, not because the little guru is worthy of such a feeling, but because he represents the Master, and the feeling is really directed to and received by the Master. Therefore it is in the hands of the disciple to make of his relationship with his little guru whatever he chooses; the point being that there is no limit to its possibilities save those which the disciple imposes; the actual limitations of the little guru not being allowed to interfere.

One of the things from which you suffer is the lack of companionship with those to whom all these things are living and vital realities and

who are also spending their lives trying to put them into practice. That is the atmosphere you would get here, and it is an enormous aid in spiritual living.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,
C. A. GRISCOM.

April 21st, 1914.

DEAR ————

* * * * * * *

You ask whether you should undertake a daily Examen, or at longer intervals. This is as you like. *All* these practices, including prayer itself, are steps on the way to full and constant communion with the Master. Our hourly periods of recollection are but a training towards continuous meditation. When you feel you can do so, you should make your hourly periods half-hourly periods. So with the self-Examens. Do it as often as you feel it profitable, but keep to whatever rule you adopt. The training to our will, the practice in self-control and obedience, comes from the faithful doing of whatever we make our rule, when we do not want to do it.

The physical habits to be overcome are definite things—tricks of manner, twiddling one's fingers, crossing one's knees, slouchy sitting, movements of hands, nervous tricks of any kind, bad manners of every kind: these all have a moral significance which we must look for in our character.

Giving up smoking is a different kind of thing. That is more of a practice against self-indulgence, like food, etc.

Periods of dryness come. They arise from many things. The comforting thing to remember about them is that what counts is our *effort:* and often we actually make more effort to pray and to perform our other spiritual exercises when we are dry than when we are full of inspiration and light.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely,
C. A. GRISCOM.

P. S.—I had to close this abruptly as we none of us have any time for anything these days just before Convention.

(*To be continued*)

REVIEWS

Rousseau and Romanticism, by Professor Irving Babbitt of Harvard University, published by Houghton Mifflin Company, 1919.

No recent book has promised so much and then proved so disappointing. It seemed an unexpected rock of sanity in our mad flood of anarchy. Within narrow limits, it does unmask sham idealism and quack spirituality. But it is based upon pride—woven of pride. Those who can discriminate will find much in it that is suggestive and helpful. Others who have no centre from which to see the author's eccentricity, may drift with his current of Bolshevism. His materialism is delusive because of a veneer of culture.

Professor Babbitt's aim is to expose the dangerous results in art and morals that follow the throwing overboard of traditional disciplines—and he wishes to propose a remedy for anarchic conditions to-day. Sane thinking on this point is rare, and is sorely needed. To the degree that he has himself submitted to restraint and discipline, Professor Babbitt can appreciate their value and can point out the folly of those who are slaves to impulse. But his degree is so very low. Humanism as a path out of the swamp is possible,—provided one understands what humanism is. To make Aristotle a model, after the Humanity of Christ had raised a new standard for the world, is like preferring to a Michaelangelo some bourgeois painter, such as Lerolle or Gérôme. Within the limitations of a Lerolle or Gérôme, Professor Babbitt is often a clear guide. Outside of those narrow limitations, he is blind.

He has to mention and discuss religion from time to time. It is here that the one-sidedness of his culture is so evident. He lacks the symmetry of development prized by the Greeks. Dr. Samuel Johnson is his type of the "truly religious" man. Why has he not studied men and women of whose religion there would be no question—St. François de Sales, St. Benedict, St. Bernard of Clairvaux, St. Paul, St. Ignatius Loyola, or, among Protestants, such names as Fox, Wesley, Emerson, and Keble? Johnson is a good "secular," perhaps, but, in any real sense of the word, not "truly religious." Unfamiliarity with religious writers accounts for Professor Babbitt's complete misunderstanding of Lao-tze, whose Tao-Teh-King often seems an anticipation of St. John's Gospel.

He speaks of religion as one of several possible paths which a man may choose. Does he know that the traditional word used of the religious life is the word "vocation"? Religion chooses us; we do not choose it. And it seems often to choose "broken swords"—victory achieved through "broken swords" will be more honourable for the Leader. Professor Babbitt writes: "It is hardly worth while, as Goethe said, to live seventy years in this world, if all that one learn here below is only folly in the sight of God." A Christian (and a Buddhist or Taoist, also, perhaps) would be willing to live seventy times seventy years for the happiness of feeling how utterly he depends upon God's wisdom and compassion. "The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men." Professor Babbitt would like to hold the reins of his own life. He feels competent to do so. He is not girt with the rush of humility. In a less crude way than with

Rousseau and some others, his motives are the independence and self-assertiveness of mind which extend far beyond the little movement he has studied, and which, through a very long period, have worked against civilization, art, and ethics.

C.

Rousseau and Romanticism is an excellent book, a sign of the new cycle. The "clear and critical spirit" of France has reasserted itself against the cynicism and neurasthenia of the *fin de siècle*. Professor Irving Babbitt has caught and interpreted something of this "spirit" in his inquiry into the nature of the "*fin de siècle*" point of view. He perceives a connection between the decadent end of the last century and its romantic beginning. If the best romanticists, even Shelley and Wordsworth, based their raptures on a one-sided vision of nature and of life, we should expect those raptures to end, like every mere pleasure, in disillusionment. That is just what one finds, according to Prof. Babbitt—the day-dream of Rousseau became Zola's nightmare. The romanticists were so fascinated by the energizing, life-awakening power in things, that they neglected that other creative power, whereby life is made to assume a form and a purpose higher than itself. The "romantic fallacy" is to glorify self-expression at the expense of self-control.

In developing this theme, Prof. Babbitt has shown originality and real genius. His theory of human nature, if carried further, may achieve for ethics what the theory of the ether has achieved for physics. The doctrine of the ether, as the cause and medium of all elements, has uncovered new potencies of nature; but, even more, it has forced scientists to use a more intuitive imagination. The ether is too elusive to be studied altogether in the laboratory.

Prof. Babbitt has revealed what one is tempted to call a moral ether, the cause and medium of all human elements, and thus the source and being of ethical law.

He calls it "something anterior to both thought and feeling, that is known practically as a power of control over both" (p. 179). So, to gain some intuition of this "something" is to glimpse the proper destiny of man and to become truly human. Man comes to know it, not merely by thinking about it, but by living and growing into it. Though universal and common to all, everyone may recognize it in himself as his own individual higher nature. Thus Prof. Babbitt states in his own terms, that great and basic truth, "the fundamental identity of all souls with the Oversoul."

But he gives, too, the corollary of that truth—the reverse of the medal. Man, as now constituted, is only partly human, only partly himself. He is in daily contact with the lower world of animal nature, which, indeed, gives to him his conscious personality, with its desires, aversions and sensibilities. It is necessary, then, for man to develop self-control. Self-control does not mean essentially the subjection of the spirit of life to some set of dead standards, such as dominated the Eighteenth Century, and engendered, as inevitable reactions, Rousseau and the French Revolution. Self-control is the check placed upon the lower self, upon the personality, in the interest of the higher nature; for human life is impossible, if a man be the prey of each transient thought or sensation.

These are remarkable ideas and constitute, I think, the very real contribution of Prof. Babbitt's work—a dual nature of man, connecting him below with the animal and above with the god; and a method of elevating consciousness to the higher planes, by the exercise of control over desire. Nor can these ideas appear less remarkable, when it seems that Prof. Babbitt has attained to them without the direct aid of Theosophy.

Where there is so much to praise, one is reluctant to find anything to blame. But one does feel, in spite of Prof. Babbitt's great intuitiveness, a limitation in his too constant emphasis on control as a negative function. The energies of life must

be subject to the spirit, but only in order that they may be purified and devoted to proper purposes. Love and desire, the essence of romance, must be controlled, but the control should consist in a lifting of love and desire from the things of Earth to the things of Heaven. Self-denial and aspiration must be two aspects of one and the same act; for, when these are separated, there will be psychic excess, on the one hand, and stony restraint, on the other. Buddha, whom Prof. Babbitt so reveres, taught always the need of balancing positive and negative, on every plane. In my opinion, Prof. Babbitt sees the negative aspect of the Buddhist doctrine far more distinctly than he sees the positive. He has not yet placed his vision in the "ether," in the Kingdom of Heaven;—nor seen that there alone lies the source of balanced sanity, the veritable essence of all romance.

But, let me insist, Prof. Babbitt has very much to say that is positive and stimulating. *Rousseau and Romanticism* is a brilliant and well-balanced book, full of learning, humour and common sense. Its ideas on the dual nature of man are of the greatest interest to theosophical students. Under the form of very good literary criticism, it teaches a lesson which the present generation cannot afford to pass unheeded—the lesson of self-control, even if negative self-control.

S. L.

The Religious Experience of St. Paul, by Percy Gardner, Litt.D.; Putnam, 1911. Many members of the Society may be interested to know of a book written by a mature and scholarly Oxford Don, of devout mind, balanced judgment, and real erudition in things both Greek and early Christian, which contains in the fourth chapter an unprejudiced account of Paul's relations with the Greek Mysteries. Its attitude towards the Mysteries exceeds in sympathetic understanding that of the great majority of Christian or purely historical writers of to-day. His divergence from the usual treatment can be seen in the following passage, from page 66:

"Some English writers who have spoken of this side of Greek religion have approached it with a curiously inverted interest. The points in it which attract them are the rites which it has in common with savage cultus, survivals from a very early stage of society: they love to observe the relics of totemism, of tabu, of ghost-worship which may be traced in them. The higher and nobler elements which the Greek spirit added to a barbarian subtratum do not interest them. But surely every religion is to be judged, not by what is lower in it, but by what is higher. It is a perversion of the Darwinian method to judge of cultus by what it contains of the stock of human superstitions, rather than by the way in which, out of mere superstition and primitive fear of the supernatural, it builds up a faith worthy of the best spirits of the community. It would not be fair in such a way to judge Chinese Buddhism, nor Indian spiritualism, nor any of the many forms of Christianity. And it is not fair thus to judge of the religion of later Greece, out of which emerged much which, when baptized into Christ, is among our most cherished possessions."

A. G.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION 243.—*Since the Inner Light exists in every individual soul, since man is in reality the Higher Self, why should he not seek his path independently of any Teacher? Why should he yield obedience to and submit to discipline from any outside source whatever? There seems to me a contradiction in some of the teaching on this point.*

ANSWER.—The question could be answered from several different points of view. This would be one of them:

It is based on two premises; one true, the other false. The presence of the Inner Light in each soul and the duty of following it, and that man in the last analysis is the Higher Self, is unquestionably true; but it is unquestionably false, also, that the presence in each individual of this Light presupposes the ability to recognize it. All religions accept in some form the substance of the first premise; there has been endless disagreement regarding the second. It was the crux of the Catholic-Protestant controversy, to give one instance,—between Papal Infallibility and the right of individual interpretation.

We must not lose sight of man's complex nature, the various planes of his emotions and mind, as well as the psychic world of which he partakes, which is always impinging on him in some manner from without, and through which, in the vast majority of cases, he passes on his way to the spiritual world. (Those who do not, have almost always been through it in the past: few and far between indeed are the rare souls, truly the "elect," who cleave a straight, unbroken pathway to the heavens, as the Israelites passed dry-shod through the waters of the Red Sea.)

In the midst of these complexities, how are we to decide? How determine with accuracy the "still small voice," the Voice of the Silence, in the hubbub of sounds, loud and faint, with which the listening ear is assailed—clamours of the past (how many "pasts"!), clamours of the present, from each department of his nature on all their varying planes? In the blazing light of his "forty-nine fires," how be sure that he keeps his eye steadily upon the one, true Light, even if he has once been sure that he has determined it?

There are many soul-powers of which we have heard, in which perhaps we firmly believe as potentialities of every human soul; but we must confess that as yet we do not understand, nor can we use them;—the ability to go to sleep without any break in consciousness, for example, as one might step over the threshold from one room to another; the ability to "go out" in the Mayavi Rupa, and to act in that vehicle as easily and as consciously as in the physical body. These we acknowledge we have yet to acquire: why not, then, the higher and far finer power of direct cognition of truth?

Again we know that good, unselfish men, willing to lay down their lives for their beliefs (the sure test of sincerity), have taken diametrically opposite sides in every kind of controversy, on every kind of principle. Each claimed to follow his Inner Light. Who was right? It would appear evident, therefore, that goodness alone, devotion alone, unselfishness alone, are not sufficient. "Hell is paved with

good intentions;" most of us, if we are living seriously, know this to some degree from personal experience. *Discrimination* is requisite. How attain discrimination? Two ways are offered. Some say: throw a child into the water and fear of drowning will teach him to swim. They carry this theory into life: send the boy out into the world, they say, boarding-school, college, travel, etc.; let him rub with his fellows, be exposed to temptation, learn his lessons of experience, test the metal composing him, get to stand on his own feet. Well, he does learn a good deal this way, or he can. But he is also toughened against learning many other things sometimes, and what about the scars? Certain faculties are developed, but others are atrophied; and if you lose a leg or an arm, or a certain kind of vision, you have lost them, that's all! There is the other way of careful training and testing, now completely out of fashion (and never much in fashion, to be honest, in the Anglo-Saxon world),—the giving of lessons, in swimming or in life. This latter is the path of obedience, of accepted authority, with all it involves in religion, government, and individual subjection—that is, if we are able to think logically, and have the courage to push our logic home. The first way has its own painful evolution—a long, slow process, where men are broken on the Wheel of the Law. The great Ones gather the fragments into their hospitals and mend them up, we may be sure of that: but though the way looks easier and pleasanter in the beginning, it proves harder and slower in the end, and one must indeed possess the recklessness of youth not to blanch at the contemplation of its dangers.

The dictum of the Lodge has always been that men could learn this way; that they made, as it were, a great leap instead of going on a straight line of development (we see here, incidentally, why evolution is spiral,—the attraction of God's will reacting on the repulsion of man's will). But in time, unless they lost the Path altogether, and turned so completely to the left that they became adepts of the Black Lodge, with great power at the price of immortality, they would return to the place whence they started, maimed and bruised truly, but sadder and wiser, and could then go on in the straight line. This knowledge, they say, the recognition of God's ultimate beneficence, is what keeps the Lodge serene in the midst of the so great heart-break of their love of mankind. Every man is walking in one or the other of these ways, though most are walking in their sleep, and we know that sleep walkers seem to be marvellously protected,—one reason perhaps why the Lodge never appears to be in haste to waken us.

To apply some of this directly to our theme,—the recognition of the Inner Light. It can be accomplished in either one of these two ways. A man can experiment with all his opinions, beliefs, feelings, until after aeons of failures, mistakes, disillusionments, he discovers the truth for himself, if he has anything of himself left when he is finally done. Or, he can follow the path of obedience, "the small old path" trodden by generations and generations of those who have "passed over" before him. Obedience to whom or to what, you ask? If he be convinced that this is the true path, that instruction and discipline are necessary and therefore to be found; and if he really desire them with all his heart and soul, not just now and again when the mood is on him, he can find them: for the *Lodge exists*. Further, the Lodge knows all about him. You might say that the Lodge would have been watching him closely for a long while past. "When the disciple is ready, the Master is ready also."

Among the "Inner Light" people there is great diversity. Among the "obedient" people there is great sameness. Look beneath the outer covering, East or West, white skin or brown, different languages or different centuries, all the great teachers and saints found Theosophy, the wisdom of God and the power of God. For Theosophy is primarily a path, a life, a discipline, leading to enlightenment. When a man finds that, he does not find a philosophy, or a new fad, or an old religion,

or any of the various attributes currently given to Theosophy. But he finds a *way*,—sure, strong, unmistakable, cutting clean and direct to the Heart of the Lodge . . . "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed!" M.

QUESTION No. 244.—*How can one find the Lodge to-day?*

ANSWER.—It sometimes seems to me that what we need is a little personal testimony, and as one of the oldest members of the T. S. (I have been a student of Theosophy since 1884, and a member of the Society since 1889), I should like to give mine. I have no intention of boring you with details, but these are the main facts.

As a child I longed and longed to know; was often miserable with longing, and, just as I was leaving childhood, the idea came to me that knowledge, sure and unmistakable, was to be found. So I determined to find it; and after floundering around miserably enough, and searching until I was often heartsick, I found Mr. Judge. Now some might perhaps say that was not much to find; almost all my family and friends said so, and there was practically everything to bear them out. He was an ordinary man; an Irish emigrant boy; none too well-educated—he never could write English, as his books show; a clever lawyer, I am told; and a good, simple man. He was neither handsome nor brilliant; luminous grey eyes and a charming smile were his only claim to attractiveness. He had a mellow Irish wit, but that was the only mental gift I ever discovered in him. That matched his smile. But you had to know him very, very well to discover the reason for his luminous eyes. He did not care to talk, he much preferred to listen; he would sit quietly in a corner a whole evening and never open his mouth; he always gave the impression that he had rather not be noticed,—you saw this in his dress. Most of our acquaintances must have wondered why we had this very uninteresting person so often at our house, and were certainly bored by him, until later events made them disapprove. I know that many stayed away because of him. All the same, when you came to know him, as you only could if you really wanted certain things—he saw to that!—you discovered that he could tell you and give you all you wanted to know. For after all he was an agent of the Great Lodge, and was here on the Lodge's business, and for that purpose alone. So the only limitation to what one could get from him was one's ability to take.

Think of all those years he lived in New York, and the hundreds of people who met him, even worked with him, and completely missed their chance, because they could not discriminate, because they could not see something when it was right before their eyes, when it challenged them from his eyes—for he never failed to challenge. Then there were all the people who abused and defamed him! Think of them sometimes, and pity and pray for them: for the Master whom Judge served so faithfully must look stern, I think, when *he* thinks of them. But the point of my testimony is this: that the longing of a little child was answered with an idea,—a clue was given, and by clinging to that, the agent of the Great Lodge was found. He was the other end of that idea. And remember, please, that all this happened in America in the nineteenth century, and not in mediaeval Europe or in India; and that we are told all the time that it can happen to any one, without exception, who wants it enough to go and get it. F. T. S.

T·S·ACTIVITIES

NOTICE OF CONVENTION

To the Branches of The Theosophical Society:

1. The Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society will be held at 21 Macdougal Alley, New York, on Saturday, April 24, 1920, beginning at 10.30 a. m.

2. Branches unable to send delegates are *earnestly requested* to send proxies. These may be made out to the Assistant Secretary, Miss Isabel E. Perkins, 349 West 14th Street, New York, or to any officer or member of the Society who is resident in New York or is to attend the Convention. These proxies should state the number of members in good standing in the Branch.

3. Branch Secretaries are asked to send their annual reports to the Secretary T. S., Mrs. Ada Gregg, 159 Warren Street, Brooklyn, New York. These reports should cover the significant features of the year's work and should be accompanied by a complete list of officers and members with the full name and address of each; also a statement of the number of members gained or lost during the year; also a record of the place and time of Branch meeting. These reports should reach the Secretary T. S. before April 1st.

4. Members-at-large are invited to attend the Convention sessions; and all Branch members, whether delegates or not, will be welcome.

5. Following the custom of former years, the sessions of the Convention will begin at 10.30 a. m. and 2.30 p. m. At 8.30 p. m. there will be a regular meeting of the New York Branch of the T. S., to which delegates and visitors are cordially invited. On Sunday, April 25th, at 3.30 p. m., there will be a public address, open to all who are interested in Theosophy.

Ada Gregg,
Secretary, The Theosophical Society.

159 Warren Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.
February 15, 1920.

NEW YORK BRANCH

The meetings of the New York Branch of The Theosophical Society are held at 21 Macdougal Alley, New York, on alternate Saturday evenings, beginning at 8.30. The meetings in April are on the 10th and 24th. All who are interested in Theosophy are invited to attend these meetings.

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